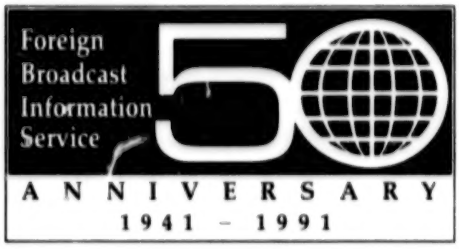
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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab Intellectuals View Region After War

91AA0231A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic 27 Feb 91 p 9

[Interview with Lebanese intellectual George Tarabishi, Egyptian economist 'Ali Nijm, chairman of the Arab-French banking group UBAF, Lebanese writer Sarkis Abu-Zayd, Tunisian writer al-Habib al-Salimi, Egyptian artist George Bahjuri, and Lebanese writer Huda Barakat; interviewer not named; place and date not given: "Arab Intellectuals Speak About Arab World After War"]

[Text] What will follow the Gulf crisis? What will our Arab world look like once the war now taking place is over? Will any lessons have been learned from the crisis? How will we gauge the gains and losses? Will it merely confirm Arab fragmentation, or will it extend to the loss of Arab prestige on an international scale and the loss of the feeling of Arab oneness regionally?

These and other questions were at the center of interviews that brought us together with a number of Arab and Egyptian intellectuals in Paris. It was clear that all share a nearly overwhelming sense of despair. Depression and pessimism have replaced any remaining confidence in a hopeful Arab future. One was so pessimistic as to assert that the word "Arab" will disappear from the lexicon of the 21st century. Another said that thoughts of greater Arab unity are just confused dreams now. A third and fourth felt that only enmity and strife await the Arab world, followed by division and more strife. This article answers the question, "How can this be?"

The well-known Lebanese intellectual George Tarabishi says:

"I believe that once this crisis is over, the Arab world will witness a series of endless crises that will only further fragment and divide it. Battles will no longer be against the Arabs, but between the Arabs. If there is any lesson to be learned, it is that any action by a state, no matter how daring, will not lead to national gains. I also believe that the fundamental point camouflaged by this crisis is that the national enemy in the region is the Israeli enemy."

Arabs and the Latin American Way

Tarabishi continues: "I have been pessimistic regarding the Arab situation. In my view, the law governing Arab development is that of 'from bad to worse.' Hence, I feel that the Arab world is not proceeding along the European path of national unity and social progress, but taking the Latin American course instead, i.e., that of splintering and social retardation.

"By that I mean that although in the 19th century the countries of Latin America considered themselves to be parts of a single nation with a single linguistic and cultural heritage, they were subsequently transformed into mutually hostile states existing independently and warring with one another. It is both sad and painful that the reality of the situation in the Arab world is precisely this, and today we wage war among ourselves. I believe the 21st century will no longer know anything called the Arabs.

"Yes, I am even more pessimistic following this crisis. Dark days await the Arabs—all Arabs. Israel will increase its pressure on the Arabs, not just in its immediate vicinity in the East, but in such noncontiguous regions as the Gulf and the Maghrib.

"We must also recognize that this crisis has diverted our attention away from nationalist ideas and the great hopes for Arab unity. What I fear most is that this diversion is itself an expression of the law of 'from bad to worse,' because it is certain that those who planned the Gulf crisis had as one of their major objectives the destruction of the concept of Arab nationalism. It saddens me to say that they were tremendously successful in doing just that. What will follow the Gulf crisis, in my view, will be an 'age of state nationalism,' i.e., each individual Arab state having transformed into a nation-state existing for itself, and consequently believing that the danger to it comes from the other Arab countries, not from its basic enemy."

Lessons Gained From Crisis

Egyptian economist 'Ali Nijm, chairman of UBAF, the group of Arab-French banks, likewise fails to hide his strong pessimism concerning the Arab region in the wake of the crisis.

"The Gulf war has confirmed the Arab fragmentation that had begun to show on the horizon shortly before the crisis. Even though it is difficult to envisage all the possible regional and international scenarios in our area, we have to admit that the Gulf crisis will have a deep and severe impact on the Arab conscience which we may not be able to determine for many years.

"As for the new world order so widely discussed these days, I believe its first seeds were sown two years ago with the unfolding of events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and German unification. I do not think the Gulf crisis will impede its progress.

"The same is true of talk of a new Arab security order. I can not imagine that it will be purely Arab in view of the confluence of international interests and the fact that in the final analysis our Arab region does not exist in isolation from the rest of the world. All we can hope is that the Arab role will have greater latitude within this order."

Ali Nijm then adds: "Perhaps the first lesson the Gulf crisis has taught us is that there is no longer any room in our Arab region for totalitarian and dictatorial regimes. We must, therefore, establish genuinely democratic regimes that are capable of meeting the needs of the people. The second is that Arab unity through merger is

simply an illusion. If we truly wish to achieve some element of unity, we have to begin seeking those common interests that bind us together as the Europeans are doing."

In conclusion, 'Ali Nijm stated that the Gulf crisis has led to greater splintering and fissuring, and God only knows how much time and resources will be needed to rebuild the destruction caused and the vast Arab resources lost after eight years of war between Iraq and Iran and the war now taking place in the Gulf.

Arab League and Non-Alignment

Lebanese writer Sarkis Abu-Zayd does not feel that the Gulf crisis was an unmitigated evil. The most significant positive result may be that it has raised a number of questions reaching well beyond the boundaries of Baghdad and Washington, indeed beyond the causes, outcomes, and the various regimes that participated on both sides of the crisis. These questions, posed earlier in various forms, are "Who are we?" and "What is our identity?"

He adds: "The Gulf war exposed the fragile bliss of the Arab situation and the institutions that governed inter-Arab relations. Now we have to think and work to create a new Arab order based on a consideration of how the Arab League can be restructured in a more effective confederative format.

"Arab nationalist thought is called upon today more than at any time in the past to renew itself and give the land a practical factual dimension. It is called upon to study the impediments to unity and the ways it can be achieved, recognizing that while the nation-state may be inadequate, it is nonetheless real and exists in the form of institutions and structures.

"The trend toward unity must be given a practical democratic dimension so that it becomes a creation of the people, not something imposed by the desire of rulers. This will require rationalizing Arab policy, phasing it, and creating democratic institutions to formulate decisions and enable the people to participate in determining a future which is no longer subject to the whims of rulers and leaders."

On the subject of Arab fragmentation, Sarkis Abu-Zayd says: "This was to be expected because the Arab League has never been able to find and impose solutions to Arab disputes. Moreover, the Arab nationalist thought that dominated this past stage was rhetorical in nature and failed seriously to address impediments to unity. It did not study practical steps of achieving unity, thus causing a lack of awareness of Arab destiny and the commonality of Western interests. So, it was to be expected that when the first shock occurred, the Arab bond would disintegrate into conflicting alignments, the most dangerous of which at present is that in some cases, Arab conflicts that were once limited to the rulers have begun to take on a popular dimension."

Concerning the new world order and the destiny of the Arab region, Sarkis Abu-Zayd raises a thought that needs to be pondered, saying: "It is no longer a secret that the United States is trying to achieve its interests by establishing a new world order that involves other international parties after a reconsideration of how the Security Council is composed. The purpose is to impose the inclusion of Germany and Japan under a formula whose outlines are still not clear.

"The Arab and Islamic bloc and Third World nations are clearly not being included in international representation. This means we must take a new look at the non-aligned bloc, develop it, and tailor it to express a new world order for the poor and the deprived. In this regard, the Arab countries, and specifically Egypt, are called on to play an international and historical role of destiny."

Sarkis Abu-Zayd concluded by saying this about the Arab security order: "The Arab world faces the danger of Western hegemony, as well as the danger of being torn apart by introducing non-Arab nations into its security formula. There are attempts to involve Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Ethiopia, and Israel, and to offer the NATO Alliance a security role in the region. Hence, the Arabs are called upon today to find a security formula for themselves, so that the way does not open to Arab security and military alliances with non-Arab regional powers and Western powers from outside the region having colonialist ambitions.

"I believe that once the League of Arab States is improved, it will provide the ideal framework for joint Arab security action."

Grieving for Nationalist Tide

After a long moment of reflection, Tunisian writer al-Habib al-Salimi, says: "I do not deny that we will be licking the wounds of this crisis for perhaps many years. It has certainly depressed all of us and filled us with pain and bitterness.

"Despite the mystery enveloping our situation today in the Arab world, the fragmentation of Arab peoples revealed by this crisis makes us grieve heavily for the overwhelming nationalist tide we witnessed during the time of 'Abd-al-Nasir. The sad thing is that regional entities have today strengthened and entrenched themselves, creating their own cultures, while the Arab reality has splintered. We do not know how this division will manifest itself or what form it will take."

Our Tomorrow Worse Than Today

Egyptian artist George Bahjuri expresses a similar view, as he asks sadly: "How can you ask me to draw you a picture of our Arab world after the crisis, when I do not know how it will end? Houses and establishments are being destroyed; death befalls hundreds, perhaps thousands, every day.

"I am sad because this war has ended all our dreams of Arab unity and turned talk of common pain, hopes, and language into a waste of time. We are moving in the direction of fragmentation and division, while the feeling of being a single nation has lost any meaning in our souls and become a futile joke passed around in seminars and conferences."

In a powerful sigh filled with despair, Bahjuri said: "Talk of tomorrow is frightening because, God help us, our tomorrow is going to be worse than today."

Crisis and Feeling of Defeat

Lebanese writer Huda Barakat, authoress of the novel *The Laughter Stone*, says bitterly: "It is really hard for me to imagine the Arab region after the war. The difficulty I find personally is in the phrase 'after the war' because for me it belongs on the list of usages of the Western media where it means the distribution of spoils and profit statements.

"Briefly, I do not want to say that I see only losses as vast and boundless as the desert whatever the outcome of the war may be. The fact is that I have regained my strong sense of physical belonging to the Arab people, and this has confirmed my feelings for the curse that befalls us in and out of war because some of us are obscenely rich while others are in abject poverty.

"Since wars generally do not cease when the military battles stop (in my view the 1967 War is still not over), this Gulf war will go on for many years long after the last signature is made on the last agreement. So how can we know, or at least, how can *I* know how things will turn out, or what the molten lava will eventually burn and destroy, while we are still at the core of the raging volcano."

Huda Barakat concludes the interview saying: "When I think deeply about the reality of the conditions in which we live and the extent of our tragedy, I find that I feel not just pessimistic, but defeated, because war, any war, belongs to one who lives through it. One gathers from it much more than one is able to absorb. Because I am Lebanese, I know that the mills of war will eventually produce the grist of pain. Pain is what defines the people, all the people, falling within the geography of the Third World beyond the boundaries of profit and loss statements."

EGYPT

Prime Minister Sidqi Addresses Peoples Assembly

91AA0209A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic 29 Jan 91 p 9

[Text] In a government statement to the Peoples Assembly chaired by Dr. Fathi Surur, Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi stressed that the coming phase of Egyptian economic liberalization will include unifying the Central Bank pool exchange rate with the declared rates of the free bank foreign currency market. The new system will establish two markets for foreign currency, the first including the present market where the Central Bank and authorized banks conduct their transactions. Revenues from Suez Canal tolls, cotton exports, petroleum, and rice go into this market. Transactions in the second market are to be conducted through authorized banks or others (money changers or intermediaries).

In his government statement, the prime minister highlighted the most important accomplishments of the last three years—a 19 percent increase in electrical production capacity; construction and renewal of 840 kilometers of rail lines; the subway; paving 725 kilometers of road and 41 kilometers of the Cairo beltway; supporting the ground transport fleet with about 1,756 buses and minibuses; 448,000 telephones; a 30 percent increase in potable water; a 26 percent increase in sewer capacity; and reclamation and provision of an infrastructure for 556,000 feddans of land.

Dr. Sidqi indicated the government is trying to increase production and investment because of their direct impact on productive capacities, development rates, and added job opportunities. Thus one government objective is the full mobilization of our resources to intensify investment, attract private sector savings to contribute alongside public funds in investment finance, without discriminating against either sector. The government has adopted a number of measures to simplify investment procedures and amend laws to channel savings into productive ventures.

Elsewhere, the government is enforcing monetary and fiscal policies that encourage a larger contribution of national savings to investment finance. Measures recently taken include enacting a bank-account secrecy law, creating new savings categories, and adopting a stable foreign exchange rate reform policy of rate unification and liberalization. Interest rates have also been freed up to reflect market supply and demand. Statistics show bank deposits have risen to LE 32.6 billion in local currency as of 30/6/1990, a 21.5 percent increase over the previous year, and $13.5 billion in foreign currency, an increase of 14.3 percent.

If savings are achieved, they must be channeled into investment and the funding of productive ventures. This will require eliminating all the constraints hindering the flow of savings into investment. Thus, a decision has been made to pursue an investment policy during the next phase that frees investment in all but a small number of areas which will be explicitly and openly declared on a negative list to be announced within a month, God willing, giving the potential investor an unlimited opportunity to direct his savings into any areas not specifically excluded. The list will be reviewed as necessary.

Efforts the last three years have resulted in implementing investments estimated at about LE 50 billion, 74 percent

in the public sector, 26 percent private. The objective is to raise private sector participation to 38.7 percent by the end of the present five-year plan. The private sector contributed 54.6 percent of total production and 56.7 percent of gross domestic product in 1989/90, compared to 45.6 percent [as published].

Local government development efforts are moving on two tracks. The first involves public state investments under a plan to be implemented by local government agencies. Directed primarily at social and infrastructure projects, these investments amounted to about LE 1,029 million in 1989-90. The second track involves citizen participation in productive ventures in the governorates valued at about LE 180 million, low-cost housing loan financing of LE 506.5 million, and funding under the Local Development Project Agreement with the United States government of LE 527 million, all of which has gone into strengthening infrastructures in cities and villages. The government is now reviewing the law governing local administration to realize full cooperation and coordination among units of local government, popular local councils, and the central government, without interference of one in the activities of another.

Dr. Sidqi stated that the essence of the economic liberalization policy—a stable government policy since it was charged with that responsibility—is to create the appropriate atmosphere for a leap in production by adding new productive capacity. This requires new investments, raising productivity in existing production units, exploiting idle capacity, confronting waste and loss in production operations, and continued infrastructure provisioning.

If this is to be achieved, economic policies in all areas must be liberalized to broaden the impact of market forces on economic activity, management and regulatory policies freed to launch the productive capacity of the various sectors, and the private sector ownership base expanded.

It is also equally clear that for this objective to be achieved legislation must be reviewed where needed to meet the goal of liberalization, simplified procedures, and reduced bureaucracy in all fields. In its economic liberalization policy the government is paying close attention to various social concerns, the most important of which may be that the cost of living keep pace with wages, income, and productivity.

Some time ago the government began a comprehensive policy to reform the regulatory and financial structure of banking institutions by setting minimum capital requirements at levels appropriate to a bank's volume of activity, correcting the structure of all commercial bank assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currency, reviewing all recognized credit and monetary policy tools to ensure their appropriateness to the general policy and objectives of economic liberalization, modernizing domestic and foreign customer relations, and expanding the network of services.

During the next phase, monetary and credit policy will concentrate on removing administrative and procedural impediments to creditor and debtor interest rates by allowing them to be set by supply and demand forces thereby enabling banks to compete effectively with one another. This policy will free the banks to set interest rates on deposits with a minimum annual rate on three-month deposits of 12 percent, to set lending rates, to make loans for any activity without restriction, and to cancel all former restrictions on preferential rates. This does not mean abolishing the system of subsidized rates for vital socio-economic development projects. I do not believe there is any need for me to emphasize that this policy will be implemented in the context of the Central Bank's recognized role as overseer of monetary and credit policy.

During the period ahead, the government seeks to support the capital market by reorganizing stock and bond exchanges and completing the lease finance project, amending tax legislation in the direction of nondiscrimination against savings for investment.

The prime minister indicated that much had been done to liberalize exports during the last few years, the most important of which are simplifying procedures, exporter directory registration, freeing countertrade arrangements from the need for administrative approval, and allowing exporters more leeway in setting aside export revenues. To complete liberalization activities in this area, an integrated system of export incentives is now being prepared designed to reduce export costs in coordination with all concerned agencies, to offer Egyptian export insurance for commercial and noncommercial risks, and to achieve equal export treatment for the private and public sectors.

Beginning in 1986, import policy changed from one of quantitative management through rationalization committees to a policy of managing by restrictions and bans on certain goods. In the current phase, reliance on quantitative management methods is gradually relaxing in favor of greater emphasis on customs tariffs, exchange rates, and technical restrictions to manage imports. At the same time, the government has adopted a set of measures placing the private and public sectors on an equal footing with respect to importation. Current policy is based on trying to eliminate any discrimination between the two in this area. The government has drawn up an implementation program to liberalize foreign trade as indicated within a specific timetable. A new set of import and export regulations containing major simplifications is now being prepared to match the new liberal foreign trade policy.

Some time ago the government gradually began exposing the prices of goods and services to market forces without state intervention. The government will continue to enforce this policy, having determined that it leads to better product quality, balanced and stable prices, more efficient distribution of resources by use, and improved project economies.

This policy will apply to all goods and services except for certain essential commodities affecting those with limited incomes. An integrated program is in place that divides commodities in Egypt into five groups whose prices are to be freed within the next three years. Dates for freeing each of the groups have already been set.

Government financial policy sought to reduce the gross deficit in the national budget and the related net deficit. The deficit was funded by the banking system making it a major source of inflationary pressure on the national economy. Thankfully, the government has been able to reduce the deficit to less than 7 percent of GDP in 1990, compared to 22 percent in 1985. Since implementation of the policies referred to above, especially freeing exchange rates, revaluating state commitments to the outside world, and reform of the banking system and public sector will raise the deficit ratio to 17 percent this year alone for a number of nonrecurrent reasons, the government will work to reduce it to 9 percent in 1991-92 using a number of measures, some aimed at limiting public expenditure.

Economic reform being undertaken by the government in the public business sector will result in reduced transfers to meet the deficit it faces, while sector surpluses will increase. The second group of measures seeks to ensure steady gradual growth of resources. Here I would like to stress that it is in the nature of liberalization and transformation to a free economy that the national budget increasingly rely on taxes and duties to finance public expenditure. For this reason the government will conduct a radical overhaul of all aspects of the tax system (components, organization, management) and a parallel overhaul of all types of customs duties and tariffs.

Dr. Sidqi indicated that naturally the national budget deficit is not expected to disappear overnight. It will persist despite every measure taken by the government to address it. Hence, the government will have to come up with resources to finance the deficit and will concentrate on treasury bills funded by real savings.

To further liberalize the national economy, a decision has been taken to transfer to private sector ownership projects now owned by local government entities in the form of joint-stock company shares. The controls, terms, and timetable for the sale have been set according to the size and capital of the project. Activity has already begun with projects having a book value of less than LE 50,000. During the six months ending 19 January 1991, 851 projects, or 60 percent of all projects designated, were sold for a total of LE 15.9 million. This is being followed by projects having book values ranging between LE 50,000 and LE 100,000. Some governorates have already begun disposing of these projects, with 58 of them (25 percent) already sold for a total of LE 4.3 million. The third phase will involve sale of 260 projects valued at over LE 100,000 over a three-year period under a special system involving establishment of private joint-stock companies to purchase and manage them on a sound economic basis. A decision has likewise been taken to sell government and public sector shares in joint private sector projects.

Due to government concern for public funds, a committee was formed at the highest level to correct the situation of losing joint projects and restructure them financially in agreement with creditor banks. The purpose was to sell government and public sector shares in those ventures which proved successful. The committee has already corrected the condition of 34 companies, while the remainder are still being studied.

Customs Statistics Concerning Imported Goods

According to customs statistics for 1989-90, in terms of value, 27.4 percent of all imported goods involved consumption (mainly foodstuffs) and raw materials; 46.1 percent involved production requirements, fuel, and spare parts; and 20.5 percent was for equipment and machinery to establish new production ventures or to replace or renovate existing ones.

To achieve the objective of greater self-reliance in providing the nation's requirements and maximal reduction of imports, the government is moving along three tracks:

1. He government has adopted an agricultural development policy designed to achieve stable farm animal and plant production growth rates by giving a strong impetus to vertical development programs, promoting farm mechanization, freeing the agricultural sector from restrictions impeding higher production, and reforming farm crop marketing systems. Tens of projects have also been implemented in the areas of general and covered drainage, development and preservation of available water resources, improved irrigation systems, and addressing the difficulties hindering land reclamation and cultivation.

As a result of these efforts, a major increase has been achieved in the amount of food grains produced and voluntarily sold to the government. Production reached nearly 12.8 million tons in 1989-90, a 15 percent increase over the previous year, and 34 percent more than in 1986-87. This is primarily due to improved grain productivity per feddan, especially with respect to wheat, rice, and corn.

2. Reduced reliance on the outside world to provide production requirements and capital equipment. Part of the government's policy in this area is to link industrialization plans to locally available raw materials, encourage the public and private sectors to produce production requirement alternatives, expand the manufacture of production machinery, equipment, and fittings locally, and work continuously to raise their quality and efficiency by establishing advanced engineering design centers and supporting those that already exist.

As a result of these efforts, the amount of intermediate goods imported annually declined from 8.2 to 6.8 to 5.3 million tons from 1987-88 to 1989-90. The amount of

investment goods imported also declined during the same period from 497,000 to 403,000 to 331,000 tons.

3. Linking importation to exports so that imports are financed out of the receipts from exported goods.

He stated that the government is committed to democratic practices in word and deed. It is intent on frankly informing the people of economic, social, and administrative problems and the ways they can be dealt with. The government is fully committed to the form and content of freedom as provided under the constitution and considers it to be the essence of democracy. At the same time the government will decisively confront all forms of terrorism, extremism, and departure from legitimacy.

Upgrading Public Sector, Freeing Up Its Management

Dr. Sidqi referred to upgrading the public sector by achieving certain specific objectives in public sector companies, the most important of which may be the following:

- Creating a single set of rules governing the performance of economic activity in both the public and private sectors to raise production, improve quality, and disallow those activities which continue to lose.
- Achieving full managerial freedom in public sector units without intervention from any government agency.
- Surrendering full state ownership except in a limited number of projects classified as strategic or having a national character. Thus, management could increase capital by opening up public subscription, selling some existing shares to the private sector through a market in stocks and bonds, with the state retaining 51 percent of the capital of a public sector company during the first phase.
- Establishing holding companies playing the role of owner by holding management accountable on an annual basis for results in companies belonging to them, but not interfering in ongoing production operations.
- Raising the effectiveness of corporate general assembly meetings and enhancing their ability to hold management responsible for results.

Freeing Agriculture Sector to Produce

The prime minister stated that the government is working to liberate the agricultural sector from constraints on higher production and productivity, including the expansion of land reclamation operations. Measures taken in this regard include the elimination of price controls on a number of farm goods which has largely overcome earlier shortages in certain categories, freeing the farmer to sell the various crops he produces by ending compulsory supply to the government except in the case of cotton, sugar cane, and a portion of the rice crop. A balanced price policy is being followed with respect to crops that remain within the cooperative marketing scheme. Prices of sugar cane have recently been increased, as have prices paid for rice and cotton over the last four years.

To complete liberalization of the agricultural sector, it has been decided to adopt phased new policies allowing the private sector to import and deal freely in agricultural production requirements in competition with the cooperative and public sectors, eliminate compulsory supply of all farm crops to the government, and continue the policy to correct the prices of the three crops just referred to on fair and realistic terms. God willing, this will all be accomplished within less than three years (approximately 1,000 days).

This policy will be accompanied by an export policy that specifies targets for all export crops to ensure the maximum return to the Egyptian economy.

Government Administrative Reform, Agency Development

In his government statement, Dr. Sidqi emphasized that liberalization of the Egyptian economy requires freeing government performance in conformity with several principles, the most important of which are that the state should undertake those tasks which it can do efficiently and individuals can not; improve investment-related agencies by simplifying measures, addressing problems, and monitoring accomplishments; improve operating systems in agencies that carry out work related to production sectors in a manner that ensures producers that transaction procedures and applicable regulations are simplified, apply a new system for selecting leaders and evaluating their work; and modernize data bases to help improve services.

External Balance in Economy, Maximum Deficit Reduction

Distortion of the external structure is represented by the gap between goods imports and exports and between foreign currency needs and resources. Balance of payments estimates for 1989-90 show that the current deficit and transfers with the outside world [as published] fell to about $1.2 billion, compared to a deficit of $1.6 billion in 1988-89, or 33.3 percent [as published]. The government view is that in addition to internal structural distortions in the Egyptian economy that need correcting, deficit management also requires the development of goods and services exports, reduction of foreign currency demand by concentrating on the manufacture of certain production goods to replace imports, and lightening the external debt burden.

Export by Objective, Rather Than Surplus

The national export strategy focuses on four points: emphasis on export-oriented goods production; adoption of the export-by-objective method, rather than export of surpluses; reorganization of the list of Egyptian exports in favor of manufactured and semi-manufactured goods; and encouragement of an

enhanced private sector role in export operations. To realize these objectives, the government has adopted a number of policies and taken several measures, the most important being:

- Encouraging the establishment of export-oriented industries. In this context, the Egyptian Export Development Bank (EEDB) received three soft government loans totalling LE 90 million to finance export industries at an annual interest rate not exceeding nine percent with grace periods of up to three years. About LE 75 million of these loans has been used to finance this type of industry. The government is also seeking to take advantage of the experiment being conducted by the International Trade Center (ITC) in Geneva in some Asian countries by establishing joint ventures aimed at export production. Agreement has been reached that EEDB will play an intermediary role between the Egyptian investor seeking a foreign joint venture partner and the ITC which will conduct the actual search.
- Working to upgrade existing production to levels suitable to world markets. A number of industrial ventures have already been selected as suitable and upgraded, including the manufacture and marketing of leather products for certain European countries; spinning, food, and pharmaceutical products for certain Arab counties; and ready-to-wear cotton clothing conforming to Dutch and Japanese market requirements.

Linking Production to Export Through Commodity Councils

- Working to link production with export by establishing export commodity councils. Examples of this include setting up the Commodity Council for Oranges in 1987 which brings together the producer, exporter, and bodies concerned with transport, packing, and marketing. Other similar councils will be set up for other areas.
- Conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements to facilitate the entry of Egyptian exports in foreign markets. The most important of these is the agreement signed with the European Common Market in 1988 which allows industrial exports duty-free entry in unlimited amounts except for cotton-thread and cotton material.

Joint Stock Export Guarantee Company

To provide a guarantee for exporters, the Cabinet approved establishment of an Egyptian joint stock company to be named the Egyptian Export Guarantee Company. The bill authorizing this company will be presented to your distinguished body very soon. This has been accompanied by a major simplification of procedures whereby all that is now needed to complete any export operation for any commodity is two documents, viz., the customs declaration and the banking form.

Sound Government Policy Through Export

Dr. Sidqi stated that the soundness of government policy to raise foreign currency resources is especially demonstrated by the export of nontraditional goods.

- Actual export volume for manufactured goods has risen from 528,000 tons in 1987-88 to 797,800 tons in 1989-90, an increase of 51 percent.
- Revenue from nontraditional-goods exports (i.e., other than petroleum and cotton) has risen from less than $800 million on average in 1986-87 to $1,257 million in 1987-88 and to $1,808.9 million in 1989-90.
- The private sector's share of total revenue from goods exports rose to 36 percent in 1989-90, compared to 30 percent in 1987-88, when one excludes those commodities that are exported only by the public sector, i.e., petroleum, cotton, and rice.
- The value of petroleum sector exports rose to $1,648 million, while imports stood at $693 million, yielding a surplus of $956 million for the sector, 141 percent of the year's target, and 11 percent higher than the preceding year. The amount going to the public treasury from the petroleum and mineral resources sector reached LE 1,529 million in the form of taxes, duties, assessments, and private bonds.
- Suez Canal transit toll revenues rose 12.6 percent from $1,306.7 million in 1988-89 to $1,471.8 million in 1989-90; tourism revenue 18.4 percent from $900.6 million to $1,099.9 million; and expatriate worker remittances rose 6 percent from $3,532.2 million to $3,743.5 million.

Population Problem, Illiteracy, Unemployment

Dr. Sidqi said that the government is addressing problems of population growth, illiteracy, unemployment, mass return of workers from Kuwait and Iraq, and the fund-acquisition companies.

The growing problem of population size is demonstrated by growth rates that fluctuated between 25.2 and 30.4 per 1,000 annually during the decade of the 1980's. The two key underlying factors are the high birth rate, which until 1988 fluctuated above and below the 40 per 1,000 recorded in 1979, and the gradual drop in the mortality rate from 9.4 per 1,000 in 1985 to 7.6 in 1988 due to continuing improvement of health care services. Their impact was reflected in the rapid population growth rate, now at 56 million people, leading in turn to increased final demand for goods and public services, growing pressure on available economic resources, and further entrenchment of structural distortions in the Egyptian economy.

The government is confronting the population problem with a set of programs designed to promote family planning services as widely as possible in urban and rural areas, manufacture all types of oral contraceptives, import other means of birth control, and make them available at no cost in health units throughout the governorates and villages of Egypt and at nominal prices

at all other outlets. Internal information centers are also enlightening public opinion and raising mass awareness of this issue. The latest statistics for 1989 indicate the birth rate has declined to 32.8 per 1,000, while the number of married women practicing birth control has grown to 52.2 percent compared to 32.5 percent in 1985. The rate of natural population increase has dropped to 25.2 per 1,000, compared to 30.4 per 1,000 in 1985. During the coming phase, the government has set a goal of intensifying family planning services in rural areas in particular.

Higher Illiteracy Rate Considered Issue of 1991

It should be noted that this problem is linked to social habits and customs that are difficult to overcome in a short period of time and to Egyptian standards of living and culture. This means that all agencies at all levels, popular, party, and government, must work to heighten public awareness of the seriousness and importance of dealing with illiteracy.

High rates of illiteracy are related to the population problem. To combat illiteracy at its sources, the government has extended compulsory education to the end of the preparatory level. It also declared the eradication of illiteracy the issue of 1991 during recent Children's Day celebrations in the framework of the Decade of the Child, so that as we enter the 21st century, darkness, ignorance, and illiteracy will have retreated. This requires accepting all six-year-old children into first grade, rather than the present absorption rate of 97 percent, and lowering the dropout rate for basic education. The government will be submitting a bill for consideration by your distinguished assembly concerning the eradication of illiteracy, adult education, and formation of the Supreme Council for the Eradication of Illiteracy and Adult Education, in light of the president's announcement that the coming 10 years be considered the Decade of the Eradication of Illiteracy.

Egypt Paid $4.2 Billion of Foreign Debt

With respect to the public external debt burden, Egypt paid nearly $4,218 million in principle and interest during the last two years, equal to one quarter of current foreign currency revenues, $2,314 million in 1989-90, and $1,904 million in 1988-89. Total commitments owed but unpaid during the same two years, i.e., 1 July 1988 to 30 June 1990, equalled about $8.9 billion, $3 billion of which were arrearages on Arab-state deposits and interest, and about $2.7 billion dollars for loans and related interest from the Gulf Development Agency.

Perhaps the most important positive development in this regard was the recent forgiveness of the principle and interest on American military debts, as well as similar forgiveness of most Gulf Arab debts. In light of the Paris Club talks last mid-November, we can expect noticeable relief of remaining indebtedness to strengthen and launch the national economy. Suggestions for accomplishing this revolve around forgiving some debts or part of them, canceling or reducing interest, and long-term rescheduling with reasonable grace periods. I am revealing no secrets when I tell you that our negotiations with international organizations are primarily concerned with this issue. We expect to have favorable results in this area in the short period ahead.

To make sure that everyone gets his due, I must point out that this positive development is attributable to the major improvement in Egypt's image resulting primarily from the wise measured political and economic policies of President Muhammad Husni Mubarak at home and abroad, which has led the whole world, and in particular [as published].

The government is working to achieve social justice through tax legislation that will increase resources without imposing a significant burden on those of limited income, continuing to delineate the tax community, combating tax evasion, and making swift decisions regarding tax disputes. Efforts in 1989-90 yielded about LE 5.5 billion in income and stamp taxes, a 33-percent increase of LE 1.4 billion over the previous year, and the identification of 318,000 new taxpayers. When added to the 676,000 identified during the previous three years, the total number of new taxpayers enrolled during the last four years rises to 994,000.

The government ensures social care for workers and pensioners, as well as insurance services for old age, incapacitation, and death. Care is also extended to the disabled and deprived, such as the handicapped, the ill, widows, and orphans. In 1989-90, 606,000 citizens were directly insured, raising the total number to 14.1 million as of 30 June 1990.

Another pillar of social justice is the provision of goods and services to disadvantaged groups at prices commensurate with their incomes. Hence the government reconfirms that the public budget will bear the difference between the actual cost of a group of goods and services and social price at which they are sold, as long as there is a segment of the population whose incomes do not allow them to be obtained at economical prices. In the 1990-91 budget, LE 11 billion is allocated to subsidize prices of basic supply commodities, cloth, essential medicines, passenger transport, and the provision of health, educational, and social services free of charge or at nominal rates as a form of redistribution of national income in favor of those of limited income.

To reach a balance between wages and prices, the government has paid annual social raises to government and public sector workers and pensioners of 15-20 percent, in addition to the stipulated periodic raise, to offset the impact of higher prices. Incentives have also been expanded, provided they are linked to higher production. This represents a firm and stable policy of improving the salaries of workers in the government and public sector. The government has also finished drafting a proposed new law for those workers designed to improve their job and financial situation in general.

Although the lack of financial resources referred to in my review of the public budget deficit has kept us from submitting it to your distinguished assembly as yet, we will not hesitate to do so once conditions permit its unimpeded implementation.

I must add that the policy of economic liberalization now pursued by the government and price corrections for many products, especially farm crops, have gone a long way to improve the relationship between incomes and prices.

Dr. Sidqi stated that the government is trying to reduce the number of middlemen between the producer and the end consumer and address unnatural causes of higher prices, a matter which is not the sole responsibility of the government, but a responsibility of the people which all must share. Elsewhere, serious attempts are being made to reduce the cost of production by raising labor and capital productivity, lowering the volume of idle capacity in production units, and decreasing losses in production, marketing, and handling operations.

On the subject of unemployment, we probably all agree that it is intimately tied to the population problem. The labor force receives 400,000 to 500,000 new job seekers every year. To address this issue, the government is encouraging labor-intensive projects, development of new urban communities, and reclamation and distribution of 150,000 feddans annually to graduates.

We must pay attention to small-scale industries because of their ability to provide job opportunities at limited investment cost. As a means of encouraging these industries, the government is helping young people to choose ventures suitable to them that benefit the community at the same time. One example of this is that the General Organization for Industrialization has prepared lists of small-scale industry investment opportunities and provides the technical data and information needed by the small investor.

Additionally, the government has taken many measures to simplify obtaining the land needed to set up these industries. For example, studies have been prepared for three industrial complexes in the new cities of Tenth of Ramadan, Sadat City, and New 'Amiriyah. The first model complex at Tenth of Ramadan City has already been completed. The Ministry of Reconstruction has prepared a study to allocate areas of land in the new urban communities to small-scale ventures to be distributed to young people with reduced land valuations and easy payment plans.

Banks offer short, medium, and long-term loans to provide the necessary financing. These include Industrial Development Bank loans to finance equipment and production requirements, U.S dollar loans from USAID through businessmen's associations, and commercial bank loans, in addition to the funds now being allocated to returnees from Kuwait and Iraq to set up small-scale industries, most of which comes from foreign assistance and soft loans.

An agreement has also been reached with the World Bank to establish a social fund to help treat unemployment by offering the financing needed to provide direct funding and infrastructure to small industries, expand existing production lines, and train graduates so they can enter these industries.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, with the assistance of local and foreign consulting firms, encourages productive families [cottage industries] by preparing studies of model rural and farm industries projects, establishing training centers for the trades and environmental activities. Facilities to these families include provision of assistance, supplies, and easy credit to obtain production tools.

Creditor nations and international agencies are supporting Egypt's efforts to reform and launch its economy. As a result of recommendations made at the last meeting of the major seven industrial nations, increased support to Egypt and Poland is expected to reduce their public debt between 33 and 40 percent.

Egypt is also resorting to some nontraditional methods to lighten its external debt burden with Eastern European countries and a number of companies in the West. Perhaps the most important one is repaying indebtedness through nontraditional exports, receiving tourism from citizens of the creditor countries, and local investments and expenses for foreign agencies.

New Strategy for Improving Egyptian Education

In his government statement, Dr. Sidqi stressed that development will not succeed if it lacks manpower imbued with education, training, values, and culture. When it was first formed in 1986, the government laid out a new strategy to improve education through major transformations, including unifying sources for preparing teachers; reorienting the educational system; channeling students into studies and specializations that benefit society and contribute to development; upgrading technical education; accepting greater numbers of students into technical secondary school; introducing new specializations into the industrial education schools, such as printing, chemicals, automated control, heavy equipment, elevators, and electronic sensing; establishing higher institutes of technology; improving the teaching syllabi in higher education to enable greater applicability, creativity, and scientific thinking; and relating university admissions policy to a student's ability to think. We have also begun to establish an open university. The government will work to implement its education strategy swiftly to ensure that these objectives are achieved.

Attention to Noble al-Azhar Confronts Extremism

The government has devoted attention to the noble al-Azhar, its leadership, and its program of study, so that graduates can undertake their calling with an enlightened understanding of religion and life that contributes to the proper religious upbringing of the individual and

confronts the currents attempting to distance religion from its precepts and roots. Government educational policy does not end at providing the citizen with a certain amount of knowledge and literary and artistic taste, but attempts to create intellectual homogeneity based on our society's spiritual and cultural values and to deepen the healthy roots of the Egyptian personality.

Health, Total Control of Summer Diseases

Many accomplishments have been made in the health field, exemplified by total control of summer diseases which have disappeared for four consecutive years. During this period, over 15 giant hospitals have been opened in Cairo and the governorates, and health insurance has been extended to 4.5 million beneficiaries, compared to 2.7 million in 1981. In 1989-90, 90 percent of children were inoculated against diseases, pregnant women were immunized against tetanus, and efforts to combat such endemic diseases as bilharzia and malaria were intensified. One hundred twenty-seven health rural units and six urban health centers were established and upgraded, and 67 maternal and pediatric care units were outfitted.

Projects are now being implemented to protect the environment by treating the problem of cement dust, planting the first phase of the green belt to encircle metropolitan Cairo, establishing public gardens and green areas in the governorates, protecting the Nile River from pollution, and initiating projects in various other areas. There is an integrated program to raise health and environmental services.

Writer Concerned That Gulf War Objective Skewed

91AA0222A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic 14 Feb 91 p 7

[Article by Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad: "Lest We Swerve From War Objective"]

[Text] Numerous statements made recently by the most prominent officials of the Western alliance are to the effect that the objective of the Gulf war is to liberate Kuwait, not destroy Iraq. To feel the need to reiterate this statement as if it were not a foregone conclusion is in itself interesting. In any case, the statement is vague, and one cannot but acknowledge that the war has created mechanisms that justify doubting the soundness of the statement.

I say that the issue is vague because there are numerous questions regarding the precise meaning of this statement which constitutes the core of Resolution 678 which has permitted the use of force to oust the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The text of this resolution speaks of the permissibility of "using the various means necessary to restore international peace and security to the region." This pronouncement was intentionally phrased vaguely in order that the circle of Security Council members approving it could be expanded.

What is the scope and what are the limits of the use of force within the context of observing the security council resolution? To what degree has it become likely and permissible to destroy Iraqi installations, not only military but also industrial and civilian, on the pretext that it is necessary to "liberate Kuwait?" A U.S. military spokesman has announced that there are 65 bridges in Iraq, of which 42 have been attacked. At least, one half of these has been destroyed. Is this permissible or is it the "arbitrary use of a right?" Is it permissible to say that the penalty for eliminating Kuwait as an entity is to eliminate Iraq as an entity? Doesn't this entail perpetrating the very crime Saddam Husayn has been accused of committing? It is worth noting that numerous notables have begun to express their concern in this regard, including Soviet President Gorbachev who declared this week that the "military operation in the Gulf threatens to exceed the use of force permitted to oust Iraq from Kuwait."

There is, in fact, evidence that calls for concern. We will be content with noting the following:

This week, a developing problem has made it necessary to dispatch U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Chief of Staff Colin Powell to visit the alliance forces in Saudi Arabia to determine whether these forces will launch ground battles to immediately wrench Kuwait from the grip of the invasion forces—battles which will inevitably saddle the alliance forces with casualties which could amount to tens of thousands of lives lost—or whether alliance aircraft and missiles will continue to pound Iraqi installations and destroy the "background structure" of the invasion on the pretext of facilitating the restoration of Kuwait in a few weeks with a smaller human cost?

We draw attention here to the fact that some members of congress have now begun to demand the use of tactical nuclear weapons against Iraq to accomplish the task of "liberating Kuwait" without saddling the United States with any casualties whatsoever. Dan Burton, a congressman from the State of Indiana, has urged "dropping hundreds of tactical nuclear bombs on the Iraqi fortifications in Kuwait." Each of these bombs has a destructive power equaling one twentieth of the destructive power of the Hiroshima bomb! Cal Thomas, a television commentator, has said that there is absolutely nothing morally wrong with using nuclear bombs because the only difference between them and conventional weapons is the number of casualties they inflict! Thus, the Iraqi people will have to endure the "clean" war that entails no American casualties!

Moreover, as soon as war breaks out, it becomes a testing ground for the latest weapons developed by the parties involved. Weapons that have been developed for a third world war against the Soviet Union and that have not ever been tested because of the establishment of detente are currently being tested against Iraq. These are existing weapons that need to be consumed, not just tested in the field. For the first time, the Gulf war is witnessing "star

wars" with anti-missile missiles that hit their targets in the upper layers of the atmosphere before [attacking] missiles can reach their targets! It may be said that modern weapons are so superbly precise in their targeting that they limit the number of civilian casualties. Each of the two parties to the conflict may have its reasons for not revealing the number of casualties suffered by the Iraqi people. But it is not right to allege that the number of these casualties is small, considering that more than 50,000 sorties have been carried out against targets inside Iraqi cities in only three weeks!

Moreover, the United States, which leads the alliance, has an interest in destroying the Iraqi war arsenal, particularly the arsenal of internationally banned weapons, such as chemical, biological, and other weapons, not just because Iraq has invaded Kuwait but also because Iraq is hostile to Israel and because Iraq has not been reluctant to harass Israel in order to draw it into the war. On the issue of mass destruction weapons possessed by parties in the region, it cannot be said that Washington's vision is identical to the vision of the Arab capitals, with their various positions, on the other side. For example, Cairo, having concluded a peace treaty with Israel, is fully eager to see the ban on these weapons expanded to include all the region's countries without exception, even if it is just because Cairo cannot afford to ignore the danger of Israel using its exclusive possession of these weapons as an argument for never giving them up.

Moreover, there are the visions projected regarding post-war conditions. The first task will, of course, be to rebuild Kuwait and Iraq. Arab funds have shouldered a significant portion of the war costs and will shoulder all the reconstruction costs. Western businessmen are already vying to get a "share of the spoils." I will enlist here the help of a phrase a BBC correspondent used to characterize the British businessmen who accompanied Douglas Hurd on his latest visit to Saudi Arabia. These businessmen noted that many utilities had been built by the British and that they have the maps of some buildings and the names of the engineers who built them. Of course, the more destruction there is, the greater the demand for reconstruction work in both Kuwait and Iraq! All these are incentives to let the war swerve from its original objective. So what are we, as Arabs, going to do?

Writer Criticizes Cotton Export Policy

91AA0223A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-IQTISADI in Arabic 14 Jan 91 pp 32-33

[Article by Yusuf Hanna: "Egypt Imports More Cotton Than It Exports!"]

[Text] Egyptian cotton has begun to enter the real world, in terms of being exported at 'sell for export' prices, which the Public Sector Board for Cotton Affairs announced on 26 November 1990. After approximately five years, the board has finally faced facts, as regards cotton prices, and has bravely—for the first time in years—cut cotton export prices by amounts ranging from 10 to 20 cents per pound. This is a partial step, although five years overdue, during which time the board raised cotton export prices constantly, in disregard of the marketing factors of supply and demand and competing prices, or rather, the state of the Egyptian crop, whose productivity has deteriorated over the past 10 years, along with constantly increasing local consumer demand. Consequently, little of the crop was allocated for export.

In 1985-86, the price of fully good grade Giza 81 cotton was 115.98 cents per pound. In the 87-88 season, it jumped to 161.03 cents, and then to 192 cents the following year. The price again increased to 197.04 cents in the 1989-90 season. The board dared to lower the price this season by 20 cents per pound. This was a courageous step, by which it thought the sale price would be commensurate with the world price, even though the board had been going in the opposite direction for years. At the same time that world cotton prices were tending to decline, the export prices of Egyptian cotton were rising each season, without regard for any marketing factors. The price of long-staple Giza 70, good/fully good grade, jumped from 112.02 cents per pound at the beginning of this decade, in 1981-82, to 141.01 cents in 1986-87, 186.04 cents the following season, to 240 cents in 1988-89, and then 250 cents last season. The increase in price jumped 126 percent, 166 percent, 214 percent, and 223 percent respectively in comparison with the 1981-82 price. This is a fabulous percentage not attained by any other type of cotton. Therefore, lowering the price of this type of cotton of the same grade by 13 cents per pound is logical, even though unacceptable in comparison with similar international types of cotton.

During past seasons, the Public Sector Board for Cotton Affairs did not take competitive cotton prices into account. On the contrary, all it did was increase prices by leaps and bounds, in order to achieve the biggest gain from the crop. Naturally, Egyptian cotton lost its world markets.

World Prices

It would be illogical for world cotton prices to increase by those percentages, which have previously reached 223 percent, because the average index figure for cotton in 1981-82 was 73.80 cents per pound, dropping in 1986-87 to 62.05 cents, and then rising to 66.35 cents in 1988-89, and 82.4 cents the following season. This index increase has only been 9 cents per pound since the beginning of the eighties, i.e., nearly 11.6 percent. However, the price of Egyptian cotton rose 214 percent, during the same season in which the average index figure for cotton dropped by 7.45 cents—from 73.8 cents to 66.35 cents, that is by some 10 percent.

Moreover, the average index figure for cotton fell by 7.45 cents during the same season in which the price of Egyptian cotton rose 214 percent.

World cotton statistics indicate that the index price for Egyptian cotton in 1981-82 for Giza 70 was 137.34 cents per pound, rising in 1985-86 to 147 cents, and then leaping in 1987- 88 to 181.68 cents, 231.44 cents in 1988-89, and 254.11 cents in 1989-90. Note that Pima cotton, a competitor of Egyptian cotton, had an index price, for Peru and American production respectively, of 112.57 cents and 109.81 cents in 1985-86, 165 cents and 178.06 cents in 1988-89, and 170.64 cents and 112.06 cents last season.

All of this proves that—according to marketing theory—the price of Egyptian cotton should not have been raised by this huge percentage, which forced most importers of Egyptian cotton abroad to switch to the competing American type at nearly half the price. Therefore, one must say that the excessive rise in Egyptian cotton prices was a great opportunity that we gave to American Pima cotton to attract Egyptian cotton customers and, consequently, resulted in our losing those customers over a period of nearly five consecutive years. In other words, this excessiveness gave American Pima cotton the opportunity to fluctuate in its average price of around 130 cents per pound. Demand for it increased, because of the terrible rise in Egyptian cotton prices, apart from the small amount offered for export, as a result of annually diminishing crops and the increase of local consumption, which reduced the resources for export.

The price of the same type of Pima cotton, produced in Peru, has not increased greatly as has Egyptian cotton. The index price was 112.57 cents in 1985-86, rising to 182.5 cents in 1987-88. The price dropped to 165 cents the next year, and rose to 170.64 cents last year, i.e., the maximum increase since 1985-86. Even in 1989-90, it did not increase over 60 cents, that is, a percentage of less than 52 percent, while Egyptian cotton prices for 1985-86 were up 127 percent, jumping in 1989-90 to 223 percent. In addition, Egyptian cotton customers complained about the deterioration of the weaving qualities of many types of cotton exported to them.

Causes of Deterioration

To sum up, the causes of the decline of Egyptian cotton exports abroad include the small quantity allocated for export because of the diminished crop, deterioration of weaving qualities, and rise in prices, which discourages any thoughts of purchasing Egyptian cotton, when compared with its American and Peruvian counterparts. Therefore, it is not odd that cotton export quantities have declined since 1981-82, from 3,871,000 *kantars* [1 kantar equals 44.93 kilograms], dropping to 2,427,000 *kantars* in 1986-87, 1,756,000 the next season, 1,200,000 *kantars* in 1988-89, and slumping to only 800,000 *kantars* last year. Consequently, Egypt's cotton exports, from the beginning of this decade to its end, have dropped from 3,871,000 *kantars* to only 800,000 *kantars*, i.e., more than 3 million *kantars*. This is a terrible drop.

Competition

All these factors resulted in a number of nations—if not a majority of them—taking a look at providing cotton for cotton markets, nearly balanced between cheapness and quality. The number of nations that had the potential to grow cotton in terms of agricultural area, nations such as the People's Republic of China, Russia, India and America, as well as Israel, and that could consequently increase the size of their crops achieved self-sufficiency in cotton production, and exported to world markets at competitive prices, which were much less than Egyptian cotton prices.

While Egypt's cotton exports were dropping from 797,000 metric tons in 1981-82, to 662,000 tons in 1985-86, and then plummeting to less than half—306,000 tons—in 1988-89, America's exports were increasing from 426,730 metric tons in 1985-86 to more than 1.33 million tons in 1988-89. Moreover, Russia's exports were increasing from 683,000 tons in 1985-86 to 753,000 tons in 1988-89, and Russia's exports of high-quality, long-staple cotton were also increasing from 19,000 tons in 1986-87 to 218,000 tons the next season, and 259,000 tons in 1988-89.

World cotton statistics indicate that stocks of long-staple cotton in Egypt have diminished since 1986, from 474,000 running bales to 332,000 bales the next season, and 229,000 bales last year. It is expected that these stocks will increase to 285,000 bales in 1990. Expressing these stocks in thousands of metric tons, they are 103.2, 72.5, 62.2, and 49.7 respectively for the five years from 1986 to 1989. Egypt's production of this type of cotton was 1,826,000 running bales in 1986, dropping to 1,597,000 the next season, 1,409,000 bales in 1988, and 1,409,000 bales in 1989. It is expected that it will decline to 1,347,000 bales in 1990. Statistics anticipate an increase in 1990 [as published] to approximately 1.5 million bales, and 1.57 million bales in 1992. If we were to change these figures into thousands of metric tons, they would read 397.6, 347.7, 306.8, and 297.4 respectively, during the period from 1986 to 1989.

Exports

According to world statistics, Egypt's exports of long-staple and superior long-staple cotton were 653,000 running bales in 1986, dropping to 428,000 bales the next season, 306,000 in 1988, and 211,000 last year. Statistics show that next year exports will total 350,000 running bales, but the facts show that the amount expected to be exported in 1990 will not increase over the previous year. In thousands of metric tons, Egypt exported 142 in 1986, 93.1 in 1987, 66.5 in 1988, and 46 in 1989. Statistics indicate that this will rise to 76 tons this year, and 94 tons next year. We hope that this will occur.

These statistics also show that America's exports [of these types] of cotton totaled 114,000 bales in 1986, jumping to 237,000 bales the next season, 265,000 bales

in 1988, and 450,000 bales in 1989. In terms of thousands of metric tons, America exported 24.8, 51.6, 57.7 in 1988, and 98 tons in 1989.

Productivity

World statistics show that average productivity per acre (equivalent to .96 feddans) in Egypt declined from 917 pounds in 1982-83 to 811 pounds in 1986-87, 762 pounds the next season, and 651 pounds in 1988-89. However, the average was increasing in America from 590 pounds in 1982-83 to 630 in 1986-87, and 706 pounds in 1987-88. This average also increased in Peru from 381 pounds per acre in 1982-83 to 580 in 1985-86, and 634 in 1987-88. Moreover, there were also increases in average productivity per acre in Russia, China, India, and Pakistan.

Imports

Along with the decrease of arable land in Egypt—as previously made clear—and the reduced productivity per feddan from 8.64 *kantars* in 1982-83 to 5.67 *kantars* last year, and with the drop in cotton allocated for export as previously explained, local consumption has been constantly increasing year after year. This has been met, during the past six years, through Egypt's imports from America of medium-staple cotton for domestic textile mills in both the public and investment sectors. Egypt imported 616,056 *kantars* in 1984-85, 616,815 *kantars* (including 25,815 *kantars* from Sudan) and 296,461 *kantars* in 1986-87. Imports jumped to 626,910 *kantars* in 1987-88, 844,726 *kantars* in 1988-89, and to 1.15 million *kantars* last year. Egypt is contracting to import the same quantity for the new season, which began the latter part of November 1990. In other words, Egypt imports more cotton than it exports for the reasons previously explained.

Exports and Importers

Egyptian exports declined from approximately 499,000 bales in 1979-80 to 372,000 bales in 1986-87, 269,000 bales the next season, and another decline to 125,000 bales last year. It is expected that Egypt will export the same quantity this year. Officials of the Public Sector Board for Cotton Affairs have done all they can to intensify their contacts with importers abroad, in order to increase the quantity contracted for export.

Egypt's exports to Japan have decreased from 87,000 bales in 1979-80 to approximately 52,000 bales in 1988-89, and 28,000 bales last year. China's imports of Egyptian cotton have dropped from 88,000 to 3,200 bales, and totaled 4,000 bales last year. Moreover, Italy's Egyptian cotton exports dropped from 39,000 to 23,000 bales, and then to 9,000 bales last year. Egypt's exports to England shrank from 9,000 bales to less than 2,400, and then to 1,085 bales last year. Yugoslavia's imports have also dropped from more than 29,000 bales to 7,782 bales, and then to 4,100 bales last year. Egypt's cotton exports to the Federal Republic of Germany plummeted from 40,719 bales in 1979-80 to 7,489 in 1988-89, and approximately 3,000 bales in 1989-90.

Therefore, the decline in Egyptian cotton exports resulted in permitting competing cotton, and especially American cotton, to infringe upon world markets, in order to wrest them away from Egyptian cotton. Or rather, it caused the export of nearly 150 percent more cotton to Egypt than Egypt exports.

ISRAEL

Ethiopian Spiritual Leader Arrives

91AE0276A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
6 Feb 91 p 2-3

[Article by Arye Bender]

[text] "One who is ill goes to a doctor. One who thirsts goes to the well, one who is hungry goes to food, and I am going to Jerusalem," the Kes Menashe always used to tell his flock in Ethiopia. Yesterday the ancient Kes, 84 years old, succeeded in accomplishing the dream of his forefathers and treading the soil of the Holy Land.

Kes Menashe Zimru is considered one of Ethiopian Jewry's top three spiritual leaders and is famed from the remote regions of Tigre to Gondar province, to the concentrations of Jews in Addis Ababa. Eight months ago he moved with his family from the village of his birth, Sanbataga [as published] in the district of Wogara in the Gondar province, to Addis Ababa. There, he served as spiritual shepherd to the approximately 20,000 Jews waiting in the Ethiopian capital for immigration to Israel. Yesterday, at an early hour of the morning, the honorable Kes came down onto the landing of an El Al jet that brought with it, to Ben Gurion airport, 224 immigrants from Ethiopia. In spite of his extreme age, the Kes was impressive with his erect proud walk. His entire appearance inspired awe and the smile did not move from his lips. He wore on his head a white turban, on his body a black robe decorated with a gilded hem. In one hand he grasped a staff with an engraved silver handle, and in the other a scepter decorated with monkey hair, with which dignitaries and sages in Ethiopia are accustomed to adorn themselves.

The Israeli consul for Ethiopia, Mikha Feldman, waited at the foot of the landing along with the head of the Division for Immigration and Absorption of the Jewish Agency Uri Gordon, and an army of photographers and reporters. "Here is Israel. Here is Israel," said Gordon, pointing his finger toward the ground. "And is everyone here Israeli?" asked the Kes in wonder. When it became clear to him that this was indeed the case, he began to skip and jump gaily. "I am jumping for joy like a little lamb suckling his mother's milk," he said to those around him.

Afterwards he was led respectfully to the airport reception hall, where he found it appropriate to say a few

words of praise: "I thank the State of Israel and the holy community who are present here and who have welcomed us. It is truly a miracle that we have arrived in the Holy Land not on mules and not on horses, but rather with the help of a craft so powerful that it could contain within it so many people," he said with admiration.

Kes Menashe, like other immigrants from Ethiopia, has very vague conceptions of the State of Israel. "They imagine us in terms of the Land of Milk and Honey. When I tried to describe for them in Addis Ababa that there are troubles in the Land of Israel too, they waved this aside," relates Mikha Feldman.

The modern history of the State of Israel is not very familiar to Kes Menashe. He is better versed in traditional stories, passed down in Ethiopia from father to son through the generations. When asked if he was not afraid to come to Israel despite the war (the Gulf war) he answers in historical terms: Yes, he has heard that the temple is destroyed, he knows about the plotting of Nebuchadnezzar, the Midianites and the Ishmaelites, and about the invasion by foreign nations. He knows that Israel is fighting for her existence, but he says, "I want to come here and fight through my prayers, and if I have the strength, I am ready to pick up a rifle and fight."

The joy at the fact of the immigration itself was diluted for him by sadness for the thousands of Jews who remained behind. "When I emigrated, Jews grasped the hem of my robe and begged me to stay with them. But my turn had come and I had to emigrate. I promised those who remained that I would pray in the Land of Israel for their swift immigration."

In the coming months, the Kes Menashe and his followers will have to bridge a cultural gap of hundreds if not thousands of years. He will also have to adapt to the idea that in the State of Israel his standing will diminish greatly, for a group of young intellectuals have taken the leadership role in the community here.

In the meantime, the pangs of absorption are hard. Thus, for example, one of the first questions which troubled the Kes's peace of mind after his landing was what to do with the daughters of the family when they were menstruating. In Ethiopia, the custom is that women, during their period, go to live in a menstruant's house, separated from the rest of the family. "My daughter is in the house when she is menstruating. How can she live with me?" he asked Mikha Feldman. "These are problems which have no solution in modern society, but he will have to become accustomed to modern life very quickly," said Feldman.

In Ethiopia, the Kes Menashe arranged marriages, divorced people, made decisions with regard to disputes, set dates for holidays, organized prayers in terms of which were to be said, and established what was permitted and what was forbidden in the realm of religion. "He knows his status will probably be reduced, but I expect that many of the older immigrants from Ethiopia will wrap him in cotton and will not let him feel this fall," added Feldman.

Rakhamim Elazar, the chairman of the Association of Ethiopian Immigrants in Israel, and secretary of the umbrella organization for immigrants, says that the Kes Menashe kept the embers alive during one of the stormiest periods in the history of Ethiopian Jewry. "After the other Keses emigrated to Israel he became the spiritual leader of the community in Ethiopia, due to his personality, his stature and his knowledge. He won special esteem for his uncompromising struggle for the survival of the Jewish community in Ethiopia as a religious community."

The head of the Immigration Department, Uri Gordon, presented Kes Menashe with a Torah scroll bound in silver. "I hope that you learn Hebrew quickly and that I learn the Gez language quickly so that you will be able to read our Torah and I your Torah," Mikha Feldman said to him. After this, the ancient Kes and the group of Ethiopian immigrants went through a crash course in catching up with the present Israeli situation - how to use gas masks and the decontamination needle set.

North Africans Said Protecting Jews From Attacks

91P40179A Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 8 Feb 91 p 3

[Article by Dani'el Ben-Simon]

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi announced that the governments in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia have taken steps to prevent attacks on Jews living in their countries.

"I want to congratulate them," said Levi, "this is their basic responsibility, but these government have not always remember their basic responsibilities to their Jewish citizens. In this instance, they have gone out of their way."

Levi made these remarks on the heels of MK 'Ovadia 'Ali's (Likud) proposal on the status of relations between the governments of these countries and the local Jewish communities. 'Ali said that in these days the Jews of North Africa are harmed, including physical attacks on persons and property, and threats against their lives. "These matters even include the desecration of the main Jewish cemetary in Casablanca. The rioters smashed gravestones and removed the bones of the dead from their graves and desecrated them. I am saying this because there have been those that have moved quickly to deny this."

Minister Levi said that operations have been undertaken recently to bring the 20,000 Jews currently living in North Africa to Israel. "To our great sorrow, these moves have gone unanswered, and the people prefer to stay." Levi congratulated the governments in these countries

and called on them to continue to fulfill their committments so that the Jews in their countries will not have to pay the price for the demagoguery of a sick man who brings tragedy and ruin on his own people of his own nation, and those of other nations as well.

At the minister's suggestion, the matter was submitted for discussion in the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

'Amiram Gaba'i, DAVAR correspondant, writes: "The head of the Jewish community in Morocco, Serge Berdugo said yesterday in a telephone interview from Morocco that all Jews are living in peace and that the holy places of the Jewish community have not been damaged."

Permits Granted for Foreign Workers

91P40179C Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
26 Feb 91 p 2B

[Article by Esther Goldbarsht]

[Excerpt] The Ministry of Construction and Housing has distributed all of the permits to bring 3,500 foreign workers to construction companies, even slightly exceeding the quota set by the government.

Among the companies that build more than 1,000 apartments per year for the Ministry of Housing, the ministry gave approvals for 300 foreign workers to Ori Dori Contactors, 500 to Ben-Yaqar Gat, 144 to the National Kibbutz Movement, 250 to Mario Leznik, and 600 foreign workers to Solel Boneh.

Shikun Hapituah, which build more than 2,500 apartments [per year], was not on the list of those receiving foreign workers.

Also absent from the list were the following: the Bronowitz Construction Company; Levi Brothers, from Haifa; Ashadar, Lipschitz, and Moshkobisch, from Haifa; and Peretz Boneh Hanegev, which builds more than 1,000 apartments a year altogether, according to ministry contracts. [passage omitted]

Ties To South Africa Reconsidered

91P40179B Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
8 Feb 91 p 5

[Article by 'Akiva Eldar]

[Text] Israel is waiting for the American reaction to the reforms announced by South African president Frederik de Klerk, in order to renew discussions on steps against the apartheid regime by the government in 1987.

In Jerusalem, significance is attached to the appointment of a Jew, an opponent of apartheid, as the new ambassador of South Africa to Washington. According to diplomatic sources, it was suggested to the Pretoria Government that it receive assistance from the Israeli Jewish lobby, to advance the normalization of relations with the United States.

Appearing before a solidarity delegation of South African Jews, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said that Israel is following the far-reaching legislative steps taken by de Klerk, directed at putting an end to apartheid, closely and with great interest. Shamir expressed the hope that such brave steps would contribute to strengthening good relations with the Jewish community in South Africa.

A foreign ministry spokesman said that the Government of Israel, and the foreign ministry have accepted de Klerk's speech in a congratulatory manner. He emphasized that Israel expresses its great sympathy with the developments in South Africa, which will benefit all communities in that country.

LEBANON

Shams-al-Din on South, Dissolution of Militias

91AE0301A Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
16 Feb 91 pp 24-25

[Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, Deputy Chairman of Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, by 'Imad Judiyah; place and date not given: "Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din to AL-DUWALIYAH: Deployment of Army in South Moves Israel's Withdrawal Closer"]

[Text] Lebanon—In the wake of the Gulf war, the major powers, especially Washington, are required to pressure Israel to implement the UN resolutions concerning the South and the occupied territories

A missile fired from here or from there on Israel is futile because the confrontation with the enemy must be comprehensive and part of a complete Arab strategy.

The endeavors to link the Lebanese crisis and the Palestinian issue with the Gulf war through the South are desperate endeavors because the al-Ta'if Accord has separated the Lebanese crisis from the region's other crises.

Beirut—The deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council is a prominent spiritual leader in Lebanon by virtue of the conciliatory role he plays among the Lebanese and by virtue of his moderate positions and his firm relations with all factions. AL-DUWALIYAH has conducted the following interview with him on the current developments in the Lebanese arena.

[Judiyah] Last week, the Lebanese arena witnessed a qualitative development embodied in dispatching the army to the South. This step has bolstered the march to end the Lebanese crisis—a march sponsored by the Tripartite Arab Committee in accordance with the al-Ta'if Accord.

[Shams-al-Din] We had been impatiently awaiting this step the significance of which is in its timing, considering that it complements the steps taken by the legitimate government in Greater Beirut. All these steps flow into the framework of the al-Ta'if Accord which has established the mechanism for ending the Lebanese crisis. This is why we view this step with pride and satisfaction. We were among the first to advocate the accomplishment of this step because we are confident that Lebanon cannot stabilize and regain true peace unless the government spreads its control to the South and ends the Israeli occupation. This is why we say that dispatching the army to the South is a victory not only for the legitimate government but also for the Southerners and for all those resisting the Israeli occupation. We are confident that dispatching the army to the liberated parts of the South and of Western al-Biqa' has moved closer the hour of liberating the South from the Israeli occupation by way of Resolution 425, as stipulated by the al-Ta'if Accord which is supported at the Arab and international levels.

[Judiyah] It is feared that Israel may resort to foiling the army's mission in the liberated parts of the South and al-Biqa' in which the army has been deployed by shelling villages in these areas daily in order to obstruct the future implementation of Resolution 425...

[Shams-al-Din] There is no doubt that Israel does not approve of spreading the Lebanese Government's authority over the entire South, because it will be the ultimate loser if the Lebanese Army takes over control of security in the South, considering that this control will eliminate the pretext to which Israel has been clinging and will [force it to] drop the arguments it has been using. But by reading the developments in the region on the basis of what is happening in the Gulf, we notice that Israel's margin for maneuver and movement has narrowed greatly. It is true that Israel still covets our land and our waters and that it does not wish to implement Resolution 425. But what is also true is that if Israel could sever the border strip and annex it to its entity, it would have done so as of the first day of its occupation of this strip in 1978 and it would not have hesitated to do it for a single moment. From this, we see how important the decision to dispatch the army to the South is. The Lebanese Government would not have taken such a major step if it had not obtained international guarantees. This is why failure to accomplish this step is forbidden. Therefore, we believe that implementing Resolution 425 has become inevitable, especially since the credibility of the major powers, particularly of the United States, is now being put to the test. Now that these powers have implemented the UN resolutions concerning Kuwait under a UN cover, they are required, when the Gulf war ends, to implement the UN resolutions concerning South Lebanon and the occupied Arab territories. I do not believe that Israel will be able to resist the international will at this particular time. We believe that international detente ultimately must be reflected in stability in the region when the Gulf war ends. The statements made by some leaders of the major powers about the international community's resolve to solve the Lebanese and Palestinian issues when the Gulf war ends confirm this tendency.

[Judiyah] It has been noted that since that eruption of the Gulf war, the South has begun to witness renewed Palestinian shelling of Israel's northern settlements with missiles. It is said that the objective of this shelling is to lure Israel into opening a front in the South so as to reopen the dossier of the Arab-Israeli conflict and to link this conflict to the Gulf war, as Iraq is demanding.

[Shams-al-Din] The experiences of the 1970's are enough, and we cannot accept a return to those experiences because they were tantamount to a catastrophe for the Lebanese, the Palestinians, and the Arabs. It is impossible, therefore, to return to the situation that had prevailed in Lebanon prior to the Israeli invasion of 1982 and which led to this invasion. Shelling with a missile from here or from there is futile. If there has to be confrontation with the enemy, then this confrontation must come within the context of a comprehensive Arab strategy. From now on, we will never agree to see Lebanon and the Southern population pay the tax anew on behalf of all the Arabs. This is why we warn against these acts which ultimately harm nobody other than the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

I believe that the endeavors to link the Lebanese crisis with the region's crisis or with the Gulf war through the South are desperate endeavors because the Lebanese crisis has finally been separated from all of the region's crises and because its solution is tied to fully implementing the al-Ta'if Accord, which is what is currently being done.

[Judiyah] The PLO links a final withdrawal of its fighters into their camps in eastern Sidon to agreement by the Lebanese Government to open dialogue with it to conclude a new accord to replace the Cairo Agreement.

[Shams-al-Din] This is something to be determined by the Lebanese Government alone. No external party, regardless of who it is, is entitled to demand this. It is the business of the Lebanese Government alone, and nobody else's business, to spread state authority over all Lebanese territories.

[Judiyah] What is your view of the manner in which the Lebanese Government must deal with the problem of the Palestinian military presence, especially since the decision to dissolve the militias covers all armed elements on Lebanon's soil?

[Shams-al-Din] We believe that what applies to the Lebanese must apply to the non-Lebanese living on Lebanon's soil.

[Judiyah] It is feared that the legitimate government may fail to implement the decision to dissolve the militias, especially since certain parties who are wagering on the Gulf war to change some equations in the Lebanese arena may obstruct implementing the decision.

[Shams-al-Din] First, I would like to make it clear that wagering on the Gulf war can only be in the interest of the legitimate government and of Lebanon especially and that the Arab and international forces that support Kuwait's liberation are the same forces that support the al-Ta'if Accord and the Lebanese peace and reconciliation procession. This is why some parties' wager on the Gulf war is a losing wager. We advise these parties to reconsider their calculations and to join the train of legitimacy so that the peace process can include them.

[Judiyah] But some militias have foreign connections and this may impede implementing the decision to dissolve them.

[Shams-al-Din] There is no doubt that some militias do not view with satisfaction the reshaping of the government and the national concord plan that is supported at the Arab and international levels. The government may encounter political obstacles with the forces supporting this or that militia. But on this particular point, the Lebanese Government must be extremely decisive because no foreign party is entitled to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs.

[Judiyah] Are you asking the legitimate government to use force to implement the decision on dissolving the militias in case some parties refuse to adhere to this decision? Do you approve of enlisting the assistance of the Syrian forces to implement this decision?

[Shams-al-Din] We do not recommend the use of force to implement the decision to dissolve the militias. But if cauterization is inevitable, then cauterization is the ultimate cure. In other words, the legitimate government will find itself compelled to enlist the Syrian forces' assistance to implement the decision to dissolve the militias if it realizes that the Lebanese Army is incapable of implementing this task on its own. We advise all factions to respond to the decision to dissolve the militias because this step will be in their interest and in the country's and people's interest.

[Judiyah] Finally, do you expect the Gulf war to have any negative ramifications for Lebanon?

[Shams-al-Din] I don't think that the Gulf war will have any negative ramifications for Lebanon, thanks to the fact that the Lebanese arena has been fortified with the national concord charter which has been unanimously approved by all factions and which is supported at the Arab and international levels. Our only fear is that this war will affect initiation of the activity of the Arab and International Fund for the Reconstruction of Lebanon. All that we hope for is that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will lead the march of rebuilding Lebanon as it has sponsored Lebanon's accord process.

President Mu'awwad's Widow Interviewed

91AE0230C London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 14 Dec 90 pp 24-25

[Interview with Na'ilah Mu'awwad, widow of late President Rene Mu'awwad, by Raja' Kammuni in al-Hazimiyah; date not given: "'President' Na'ilah Rene Mu'awwad to AL-HAWADITH: 'Avenge Martyred President by Achieving His National Dreams'"]

[Text] On Independence Day, November 22, the reconciliation-accord president who believed in dialogue, a reserved man, a believer in the politics of nonviolence, a man of institutions and dialogue who believed in the importance of the role of the Lebanese army and who believed that an issue exists for that army, was assassinated.

President Rene Mu'awwad was a close friend of Arab and Western elements wanting to extend a helping hand to Lebanon after having seen his firm resolve to restore the country after its ordeal.

The late president was very optimistic that the Lebanon of tomorrow and an end to the ordeal were near at hand. However, when tomorrow came on Independence Day, it took the president with it.

Everyone accused everyone else. "President" Na'ilah Rene Mu'awwad, as she is called by her supporters, points the finger at the situation created by General 'Awn and the rebels who rejected the al-Ta'if approach.

The investigation continues. Once its results are clear, they will be known to all. The Mu'awwad family and the Lebanese can only be avenged by following in the footsteps of the late president.

President Na'ilah follows the implementation of the late president's program of action either through her expected appointment as a deputy from her region in the Parliament or through the President Rene Mu'awwad Foundation.

She repeatedly calls on the people to support and reinforce the legitimate authority of President Ilyas al-Harawi because nations are not built by hopes but by serious effective action. The innocent smile of President Mu'awwad will remain a deep knife thrust in the blood-stained consciences of the killers and an eternal curse warning them that the people could rise against them. AL-HAWADITH met and conducted the following interview with President Na'ilah Rene Mu'awwad in the home of the late president in al-Hazimiyah as she was preparing to celebrate mass in Zagharta on the first anniversary of his death along with other Lebanese and Arab personalities, friends, and supporters.

[Kammuni] With every independence celebration Na'ilah Rene Mu'awwad has both a personal and a public post combined with great pain and grief. Yet, this date has drawn a new image of martyrdom and outlined

a sad and deeply penetrating story of Lebanon's independence in 1989. Can you tell us this story of renewed martyrdom and independence?

[Mu'awwad] Independence Day concerns not only Na'ilah Mu'awwad. By falling on the same day, the martyrdom of President Mu'awwad and independence celebrations mean we must open new pages on behalf of the Second Republic in whose cause he died.

[Kammuni] It is said that the most important milestone in Lebanese history was the election of President Mu'awwad, followed by his martyrdom. Do you believe there is official intent to declare Independence Day and the date of President Mu'awwad's assassination a new Martyrs' Day?

[Mu'awwad] The 1943 heros and martyrs of independence and those who died for their country over the ages, led by President Mu'awwad, have together fashioned our present independence and level of accomplishment, because nations are not built in a day or two.

Thus, the person killed on November 22 was not Rene Mu'awwad the minister, the deputy, or the president, but the man who bore the principles of reconciliation. He is not the only martyr in Lebanon. There are many who died as martyrs who were never mentioned. In my ordeal I join many wives and mothers who have lost their husbands and sons. I hope that my husband's martyrdom will be the last in this long war to build the country and the state he died for.

[Kammuni] The investigation is said to have uncovered some details and circumstances pertaining to President Mu'awwad's assassination, but they remain locked up in secret files until the time is right to reveal them.

[Mu'awwad] There is no question but that President Mu'awwad's martyrdom belongs to the state and the nation. I am certain that if something new is learned, it will come to public attention, but as of this moment there is nothing new.

[Kammuni] Were the names or agencies behind the assassination of President Mu'awwad to come to light, what would your judgement of them be as his wife?

[Mu'awwad] First of all, we have to learn the real reason for President Mu'awwad's assassination. He was known as a man of reconciliation who tried to implant national unity and institutions. He had worked in the political arena for over 32 years, administered several ministries, and headed parliamentary committees. [He was known for] the conditions surrounding his election after national reconciliation was worked out in al-Ta'if with Arab and international support. Even the United Nations broke with tradition and supported the president's personal presence, as did members of the tripartite Arab committee who together with Syrian brothers assisted in restoring Lebanon's sovereignty and redeploying Lebanon's own forces throughout its territory. Thus, knowledge of the real intentions of those adversely affected by the return of a unified Lebanon will alert us in the future to what may come.

As his wife, I realize that his martyrdom does not belong to me, but to the nation. It is not a matter for me alone, but for all Lebanese.

[Kammuni] But revenge is a traditional custom in the Zagharta region.

[Mu'awwad] We shall avenge him by realizing his dreams. Revenge, especially in Zagharta, is an inherited tradition. However, the Mu'awwad family and the people of Zagharta today know that his martyrdom is not their private property. Rather, they have to work to accomplish his political program and allow the state and the law to pursue the investigation and uncover the perpetrators.

[Kammuni] Is it your view that the late president was preparing an integrated political plan for Lebanon?

[Mu'awwad] President Mu'awwad was a person who believed that the various regions should be equal. His long experience in parliamentary committees and ministries gave him a broad political perspective and enabled him to outline a radical resolution to the Lebanese crisis.

[Kammuni] When you speak of equality, do you believe he would have been able to impose it and make it a fundamental point in his political program?

[Mu'awwad] The president was well aware of conditions in areas of Lebanon and unafraid. He had a task force composed of 70 young men with whom as deputy and minister he discussed the problems of the various state sectors and administrations, especially the information sector.

[Kammuni] Was he preparing a plan to revitalize the state information media? What was he preparing with respect to the private media?

[Mu'awwad] President Mu'awwad was forming a Media Council consisting of competent journalists to plan for a mature official information [service] and coordinate information activity between the private and public sectors to end the anarchy and confusion of journalists.

[Kammuni] Is it true as rumored that President Mu'awwad opposed an international plan to partition Lebanon and paid for it with his life?

[Mu'awwad] I do not believe there was any plan like that, at least not internationally. Rather, the election of President Mu'awwad, embodying the unity of the land, people, and institutions of Lebanon, was supported nationally and internationally. No one but Lebanese can determine the struggle, and that is why no other administration, no matter how powerful, can impose itself.

[Kammuni] Yet everyone speaks of a plot.

[Mu'awwad] It would be we who carried it out, and we were capable of doing so, but President Mu'awwad embodied international and Arab support for Lebanon, particularly in view of the stances he took during the long years of his political career. Hence he did not stand up against any plot, because there was none. No one would dare to discuss such a proposal with him.

[Kammuni] During the 17 days he was in office there was talk he was making attempts at reconciliation? Can you tell us anything about this?

[Mu'awwad] Lebanese unity was not going to come about in the absence of reconciliation. The presence of groups going for each other's throats was a fundamental impediment to national development. I am reminded of President Mu'awwad's appeal on Independence Eve when he focused on reconciliation: "There can be neither a state nor a nation without a unified people; there can be no unity of the people without reconciliation, and without love and [national] accord." Ahdan was a center where these various factions met, regardless of their tendencies, because the president's strong relations with them were capable of accomplishing the rapprochement being sought.

[Kammuni] We still talk about the North. Do you support the traditional leaderships, particularly since you have now been empowered to dedicate yourself to representing the Mu'awwad family and playing a prominent political role?

[Mu'awwad] I am opposed to categorizing people as traditional or rebels. Responsibility is an honor for anyone to whom it is entrusted. It is not the end of one's ambition, but the beginning of serious activity.

President Mu'awwad took responsibility seriously as a person, not just as a legacy. As president of the republic he followed the same practices he had earlier as deputy from Zagharta, then minister and chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee. Any political role President Mu'awwad assumed came as a complement to his march, his line, and his policy of unification based on the principles and values he was raised with, lived by, and practiced throughout his life.

[Kammuni] Do you feel that the al-Ta'if undertaking is a final agreement for resolving the crisis?

[Mu'awwad] By initiating a dialogue between factions, the al-Ta'if Accord was able to halt the conflicts between districts and calm the clashes that had turned life into hell for the Lebanese. It is a formula for reconciliation and dialogue to ensure a genuine beginning to building a sound nation. But as in all countries of the world, it is not the ultimate formula. It has to be improved and amended in accordance with the demographic, economic, and social development of the public.

The most important thing is that it restore the confidence of Lebanese in one another.

[Kammuni] Seventeen days was insufficient for the public to get to know the late president as a person. How would you present him to us?

[Mu'awwad] As a general rule, I do not like to get into personal matters, but I believe that President Mu'awwad was not about to change in moving from one post to another because his motto in life was nonviolence. He gambled on the success of state and security institutions, especially the Lebanese army. Many of the stances he took testify to that, especially his continual insistence on the unity of the army. I recall one of his interventions in the Lebanese Parliament in 1985 when he stressed the role of the army and the need to find an issue for it.

[Kammuni] Do you mean that he approved of the composition of the Lebanese army?

[Mu'awwad] I do not know exactly. He gambled on the role of this institution and refused to form a militia in Zagharta out of his belief in the role of the Lebanese army. This is something he stressed on more than one occasion in Zagharta.

[Kammuni] Because he was a Chehabist.

[Mu'awwad] President Mu'awwad may have met with President Chehab through the army. He was a Chehabist because he believed that the state could not be strong without an army.

[Kammuni] What were his primary concerns?

[Mu'awwad] His first concern was the security situation, also development. Above all else, he worked to eliminate deprivation, which is not sectarian, by creating a social condition that would affect all other sectors. The deprivation of people has to be relieved, followed by the application of freedom and democracy. These were not just slogans for President Mu'awwad.

He was consumed by a concern for education, even before being elected president, when he was Minister of Education from 1982-83 and subsequently. He brought students and pupils in various districts together. He went down to the examination center to pull the students of Lebanon together, despite the threats he had received. I remember that many young people thanked him for gathering young Lebanese of all sects in a single location.

He worked silently, within a broad framework, without a lot of noise. His work always focused on the objective of coexistence.

[Kammuni] Did he consult you on some of his decisions?

[Mu'awwad] Very little. He kept things to himself and preferred to work through a team of qualified advisors.

[Kammuni] How did you deal with the reticence that characterized the late president, noting at the same time that you have begun to follow the same path?

[Mu'awwad] Of course; I am President Mu'awwad's student. He always said that restraint was absolutely

essential, especially with the press, but also with politicians, because passing on the secrets of political action destroys it. Events have proven that a word dropped in the wrong place will be misinterpreted. This helps no one, but simply creates problems.

He was always asking me to stay silent if there was no reason to speak, even when we were alone.

[Kammuni] Do you believe that had he been able to, President Mu'awwad would have governed [as published] continue, with all due respect to the men we have at present, do you think it would have been possible to pursue any specific plan in the face of the oppressive anarchy of daily life and services?

[Mu'awwad] It is easy to level criticism, but we have to take into consideration the conditions surrounding the election of President Mu'awwad and those surrounding President al-Harawi's election. President Mu'awwad faced opposition, especially in Lebanese ranks. He said that this rejection would bring anarchy back to Lebanon, not peace or unity.

Unfortunately, one or more factions rejected this course, and I hold them responsible for President Mu'awwad's assassination. Anarchy returned, and total destruction has impaired state institutions. So no proposal should be rejected simply for the sake of rejection, because the building of nations is neither easy nor without costs to be paid.

[Kammuni] Then you persist in the view you expressed in Zagharta when you charged the General 'Awn situation was the reason for the assassination of the late president?

[Mu'awwad] The failure to turn over the Ba'abda Palace to the legitimate new government was most certainly a major reason for the martyrdom of President Mu'awwad. I have made myself clear on that.

[Kammuni] Did he face difficulties in forming a government of national reconciliation?

[Mu'awwad] President Mu'awwad gambled on officials and commanders, because he felt that the politicians were not knowledgeable about all of the districts, their needs, and their requirements. As a result, he had the idea to form a government composed of people who knew the history of their country and its districts very well.

[Kammuni] Weren't there some obstacles?

[Mu'awwad] Not at all, because President Mu'awwad faced obstacles regardless of what they were with patience and persistence. For him every problem had a solution. Determination and willpower were all that was needed to overcome an obstacle. Deputy Nasri al-Ma'luf used to say about him, "President Mu'awwad will dig at a mountain with a needle."

[Kammuni] There is a confidence gap today between the citizen and the state and its institutions which concerned officials are trying to address. Do you think there is any way that this gap can be bridged?

[Mu'awwad] You forget that state administrations were divided, and employees were unable to perform their work. It is true that the present state of daily life and services is difficult, but only two months ago the ministries had no structure and had been damaged by a war that had gone on for 15 years.

So we have to be fair. I would like to stress the need to truly support the legitimate authority by enabling it to emerge from its isolation. Today the slogans about state exploitation and nonpayment of taxes are finished. The citizen must absorb the concept of the state and stop trying to find new ways to evade state taxes and engaging in other forms of unpatriotic behavior.

[Kammuni] The situation calls for awareness and understanding on the part of the citizen. Don't you feel we need to establish a Ministry of Guidance and Direction in this area and others?

[Mu'awwad] There certainly is a need to establish more than one ministry—a Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, a Ministry for Youth and Sports—because we have to make the best use of our young people and give them the opportunity to contribute to the interest of the nation and the state.

There is also a need for a Ministry of Design after all this tremendous destruction, and I would point out that the skills and the possibility of foreign assistance exist.

However, today we are still in need of popular support for the state so that it can guarantee the services and assistance the people need. Personal glories pass, but nations, the dream, and the principles that we must maintain to build our country remain. A country can not be built quickly, and it may not satisfy all of our ambitions and plans, but we have to have patience and display virtue in order to build the Lebanon of the future.

[Kammuni] Are there any plans to honor the late president?

[Mu'awwad] We are preparing to get ownership of a piece of land at the site where President Mu'awwad was martyred in order to place a statue of him there. We have set up a foundation bearing the name of the late president. We have also renamed Qulay'at airport after him, as well as the street on which he was assassinated.

[Kammuni] What are the objectives of the President Mu'awwad Foundation?

[Mu'awwad] The foundation intends to use the strong reserve of support President Mu'awwad enjoyed to serve the state and the nation. The president was a friend of Arab and Western elements that may contribute to developing Lebanon. President Mu'awwad had a history

of involvement with UNESCO which he was going to involve in educational policy.

[Kammuni] What is you evaluation today of relations with President Ilyas al-Harawi and his family.

[Mu'awwad] We have an old friendship with President al-Harawi and his family. He has given us all possible care and consideration.

[Kammuni] There is talk that you and Princess Khawla Arslan will be appointed as two female visages in the new Parliament. Is this true?

[Mu'awwad] I am nominated to represent my district as deputy. There is a lot of talk about appointments and the work of the Parliament that is ahead. If appointments are needed while we await elections, they will be temporary. So, an appointment is not final, while a deputy represents the people who elect him.

We should not forget the extreme importance of the role of the Parliament in reaching the al-Ta'if Accord and restoring cohesion to the country through the election of the president of the republic despite all the provocation and threats it encountered. Had it not been for the present parliament, the country would be finished, and matters for the Lebanese at home and abroad would have gotten worse and worse.

Regarding Princess Khawla Arslan, with whom I have a strong and unshakable friendship, she is capable of announcing her position clearly and explaining her view on this matter in detail, because women have an important role to play in politics as in other walks of life.

INDIA

Political Parties Take Stand on Gulf

Congress-I Discussion

91AS0639A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 24 Jan 91 p 9

[Article by Subhash Kirpekar]

[Text] New Delhi, 23 Jan (The Times of India News Service)—Believe it or not, but Monday's Congress working committee [CWC] was dominated by Mr Sitaram Kesri, AICC [All India Congress Committee-I] treasurer. Quoting chapter and verse from Congress tradition, he spoke of what should be the Congress position on the Gulf war.

So far, Mr Kesri told the CWC, the Chandra Shekhar government had given the impression of being pro-U.S. The V.P. Singh government had also created a similar impression of being pro-U.S. Both these governments had faltered and failed in projecting India's long established foreign policy whose main ingredients, according to him, were its anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist thrust.

Mr Kesari fervently pleaded that the Congress take a strong anti-U.S. line. He recalled how Mr Jawaharlal Nehru had taken a firm position on the PL-480 wheat issue and said that even if people had to go hungry the imports would not be at the cost of India's dignity. Similarly, Mrs Indira Gandhi had taken a strong position when Vietnam fought the might of the U.S. armed forces.

But today, he said, when 28 nations had lined up their military might against Iraq, how was it that India was not raising its voice? And why should the Congress appear to take a pro-U.S. line when it had consistently sided with the underdog?

It has not been usual for Mr Kesari to take such an active part in CWC discussions on foreign affairs. But behind the eagerness to chalk out a clearcut policy of the Congress party is the bid to woo the Indian Muslims.

Mr Kesari's view that a correct policy on the Gulf war would win over a large chunk of the Indian Muslim electorate to the Congress camp is shared by several other Congress leaders. What was needed was that the Congress message on the subject be loud and clear.

The CWC, after the discussion, endorsed Mr Rajiv Gandhi's letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, containing the four ingredients which could ensure sustained peace and provide a comprehensive and just solution to the problems in the region.

Mr V.N. Gadgil, party spokesman, who was on Monday finding it a bit difficult to answer questions on whether there was a linkage between the Palestinian question and the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait yesterday pounced on the statement made by the U.S. president, Mr George Bush.

The U.S. president's statement was that after the war was over, the world should address itself to resolving the long-standing issue of Palestine.

Meanwhile, Prof K.K. Tewary, former central minister, has said that if we are true to our legacy and concerned about our future, we must expose the machinations of the Western oligarchy which has manipulated even the United Nations to sanction what is basically an imperial war for the total control and domination of the post cold war international order. He also stated that decades of suffering and misery of the disinherited Palestinians is a far greater crime than the Iraqi blunder in Kuwait. Yet we have decided to feed our people on brazen Western propaganda that liberation of Kuwait is synonymous with peace, stability and total democratisation of the international system.

Opposing the act of the Western powers in bombing a proud civilisation into the ignominy of the stone age, Prof Tewary said that India should mobilise global opinion for a peaceful settlement of both the Palestinian and Kuwait conflict. Let India not be a party to this betrayal of the post colonial civilisation, he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Gadgil complained that on Monday's TV news bulletin, Doordarshan had wrongly reported that the ambassadors of Iraq and the PLO had urged Mr Rajiv Gandhi to take the initiative. That is incorrect. They only held discussions on Monday evening. The TV report is baseless, he said.

BJP Statement

91AS0639B Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 20 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] New Delhi, 19 Jan—In a carefully-worded statement, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata party] today came out fully in support of the United Nations Security Council resolutions [UNSCR] sanctioning the use of force to eject Iraq from Kuwait and urged the "nation to stand united and steadfast at this juncture."

The BJP national executive, which discussed the Gulf situation this morning, came out with a statement which subtly supports the U.S. position totally, and obliquely criticised all those who were critical of the war against Iraq. It also expressed concern at the Iraqi attack on Israel and hoped that the scope of conflict would not expand.

In a bid to take a middle-of-the-road position, the BJP leadership was critical of Iraq but did not dismiss the Palestinian question as a non-issue. It said, "The executive committee felt that a lasting peace in West Asia is not possible unless a comprehensive settlement of all pending issues takes place."

However, it echoed both the U.S. and the Indian Government's position that Iraqi withdrawal must precede any settlement of the Palestinian issue. The statement said, "Convening of an international conference cannot take place unless Iraq withdraws from Kuwait, thus enabling the international community to concentrate on, and address itself to the just cause of Palestinians. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, India should initiate the process in consultation with other like-minded countries."

The most significant part of the statement said, "The considered view of members was that India being a party to UNSCR 678 must continue to lend support to it until it is fully implemented." This, in effect, states that India should back the U.S.-led war till such time its objectives were achieved.

Referring to the growing criticism of the government's line from both the Congress(I) and the communist parties, the statement said, "Members were of the view that this hour of peril is not an occasion for advocating partisan views. They urged the nation to stand united and steadfast at this juncture. This is no time for parallel diplomatic initiatives. Equally, demonstrations and counter-demonstrations must be avoided."

In reply to a question as to behind whom the nation should stand, the BJP MP [Member of Parliament], Mr Jaswant Singh, said, "Behind the United Nations resolutions." The criticism against demosntrations were clearly against the anti-war and anti-Bush demonstrations that have taken place so far.

On the question of Israel, the statement said, "Some members expressed concern that by launching missile attacks on Israel, Iraq has put into effect its earlier threat. Members were of the view that the present conflict in the Gulf must not be permitted to expand into any other theatre or spheres."

Elaborating, Mr Jaswant Singh said if Iraq succeeded in expanding the conflict into an Arab-Israeli war, it would be "highly dangerous," particularly for India. Party sources later said the fear was that Israeli counter-attacks would create a "pan-Islamic" movement which would adversely affect India.

CPI Leader

91AS0639C Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 23 Jan 91 p 7

[Text] Mr Gurudas Dasgupta, the CPI [Communist Party of India] Rajya Sabha MP [Member of Parliament], on Tuesday denounced the role of the Soviet Union in the Gulf war as "disappointing and distressing" and regretted that a country that was known in history for its support to and solidarity with struggle against imperialism and hegemonism should opt for a subsidiary role by seeking the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and not denouncing the "unparalleled savagery" being committed by the Americans in Iraq.

In a statement in Calcutta, Mr Dasgupta said though Iraq's occupation of Kuwait was unpardonable, the U.S. action in the Gulf in the name of UN resolution was "a fraud and not permissible" in today's world. The CPI leader said the Soviet policy lacked recognition of the significance of the Gulf war and to take a "formal approach" on this issue amounted to the USSR going back on its tradition that the Great October Revolution had ushered in. "I appeal to the Soviet Union to give up its passive role and do all that is possible to end the war and U.S. aggression."

CPI-M Politburo

91AS0639D Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 18 Jan 91 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, 17 Jan—The CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] politburo today denounced the war launched by the U.S. armed forces with the massive aerial bombardment of Iraq and said, "With this, the United States has begun a war in the Gulf which will have incalculable consequences for the Arab peoples and world peace."

The CPI(M), which was the first political party to come out with an outright condemnation of the U.S. action, said, "The Bush administration has opted for war instead of heeding world public opinion to exert every effort for a peaceful settlement. It even rejected the last-minute French plan which could have provided a basis for negotiations."

It also reiterated the necessity to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Arab peoples to resolve "outstanding issues in West Asia, including the Palestinian question" by holding an international peace conference along with the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

India Must Take Firm Stand

Demanding an immediate stop to the American military action, the CPI(M) said, "The people of India expect the Indian Government to take a firm stand against war in the Gulf imposed by imperialism and to demand the convening of the Security Council meeting immediately for pursuing an alternative path for the peaceful resolution of the Gulf crisis."

The politburo also called upon all anti-imperialist and democratic forces "to launch widespread anti-war actions so that the weight of Indian public opinion in favour of peace can be felt in international circles."

CPI's Stand

In a separate statement, the CPI also strongly condemned the U.S. attack and said, "U.S. imperialism is re-enacting its role of an imperialist bully. The West Asian tangle could and should have been solved by negotiations and peaceful means."

The CPI central secretariat said, "In fact, the French resolution in the United Nations was a positive step

towards facilitating a solution of not only the Kuwait problem but all issues in West Asia. By rejecting this solution, the U.S.'s aim of supporting Israel's illegal actions while shouting hoarse about Iraq's action stand revealed as gross double standards in international life and exposes its evil designs in West Asia."

Refueling Compromises India's World Standing

91AS0638A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 30 Jan 91 p 8

[Text] Soon after India gained its independence, the country became a factor to reckon with in international politics. Nobody could take India for granted. From the days of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indians have been extremely conscious of the fact that internationally, this country has been held in high regard. This often made up for domestic weaknesses and failings. Jawaharlal Nehru was succeeded by Indira Gandhi who, like her father, was recognised as an important world leader. Even Mr Rajiv Gandhi, despite shortcomings in the domestic field, made a place for himself in the league of world class leaders during his brief period in office. This was possible because India steadfastly stuck to the policy of nonalignment. However, this pride has now been injured by the refuelling of Gulf-bound U.S. aircraft at Bombay's Sahar international airport. This will seriously compromise India's international standing, particularly among the nonaligned countries, before whom India has been strenuously cultivating its image as a most principled nation. It goes counter to the public posture adopted by India on the Gulf war. Though India did not approve of Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, it did not support the precipitate action of the U.S.-led multinational forces against Iraq either. In fact, following popular pressure, the government's attitude towards the U.S. action became more critical. Against this background the refuelling of U.S. aircraft has shocked those who hold dear the policy of nonalignment.

It is now revealed that the permission for refuelling was given by the previous government headed by Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh in September last. However, this does not excuse the present government for not having corrected the fault of its predecessor. The V.P. Singh government was inherently a weak one, not only because it was a minority government but also because it was propped up by two incompatible political forces, namely, the Left and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. As the Mandal Commission issue showed, the V.P. Singh government's commitment to the values of the national movement was only skin-deep. The roots of nonalignment lie in the values cultivated during the national movement. In fact, one of the supporting parties of the National Front government, the BJP, has no commitment to the policy of nonalignment, just as it has no commitment to secularism. That is why the BJP has not joined the other national parties in demanding an immediate cessation of hostilities in the Gulf. Mr V.P. Singh was also the last of the politicians of national stature to give such a call. Perhaps, Mr Singh was constrained by the Shahi Imam of the Jama Masjid, who is his main powerbroker among the Muslims and is known to be a beneficiary of Saudi Arabian finances. In fact, during the initial phase of the crisis, when concerted intervention would have produced results, the previous government totally abdicated its responsibility in foreign affairs. Its concern was confined to the evacuation of Indians from Kuwait and did not extend to defusing the crisis. In that drift, the refuelling of U.S. aircraft was agreed to, presumably without any trade-off.

It is, however, true that at the popular level there is not as much opposition to the U.S. action as there should be. This is perhaps because India is facing a real dilemma. Ordinary Indians think that, on the one hand, there is the problem of increasing oil prices, and on the other, there is the threat of Super 301: President Saddam Husayn symbolises increased oil prices, Mr George Bush represents the bullying tactics of Super 301. The choice is, indeed, difficult. Hence, India should strive to ensure that neither side emerges as a clear victor. It is, perhaps, too late for this. Yet is is worth the while to make concerted efforts in this direction. This is more so because the interests of countries like India converge with the strong anti-war sentiments, on both moral and environmental grounds, being expressed in the West, including the United States. It is most unfortunate that the facilities given to U.S. aircraft for refuelling will impair India's capacity to effectively intervene in the situation. India is now suspect in the eyes of Iraq. Its ambassador has already protested to the government. Other nonaligned countries will also not take India as seriously. In short, because of the shortcomings of the previous government, India's voice in the international community, which would have also served the interests of the country, has become weaker. To retrieve its prestige, India must forthwith stop the refuelling of U.S. aircraft.

Refueling Accents Need for U.S. Good Will

Intelligence Panel Report

91AS0627A Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, 3 Feb—A note prepared for the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) of the Union Cabinet has confirmed that the arrangement enabling the armed forces of the United States—its air force as well as navy—to use Indian air space and port facilities dates back to the mid-1980s, if not earlier.

The note, in effect, demolishes the attempt of certain interested quarters to blame the deal on the V.P. Singh Government's alleged pro-U.S. tilt. (The JIC, now headed by Mr R.P. Joshi, reports directly to the Prime Minister on matters of security concern.)

Observers believe this explains why the Congress(I) Working Committee [CWC(I)], in its resolution last Friday protesting against the refuelling of U.S. Air Force planes at Bombay, Madras and other airports at a time

when the United States was involved in a war against a friendly nation, did not level any accusation against the V.P. Singh regime.

Even more significantly, the CWC(I) called only for "suspending"—and not totally stopping—the refuelling and air corridor facilities for foreign military aircraft. The thrust of the resolution was on the Government's failure to "review" these facilities even after the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf.

Informed sources said today that had the insinuation that refuelling facilities are being extended to U.S. military transport planes (it is not altogether unlikely that similar facilities have been given to combat aircraft also) in terms of a deal between the V.P. Singh regime and the U.S. authorities been true, the CWC(I) would not have missed the opportunity to hit at the National Front Government and particularly its leader.

Moreover, the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, would not have hesitated to scrap the deal without loss of any time had its author been his bete noire, Mr V.P. Singh. On the contrary, the Chandra Shekhar Government has stubbornly refused to suspend the facilities.

Communication Gap

There is also apparently a communication gap between the Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and those of his party colleagues who have raised a shrill cry over the refuelling controversy. This is not the only issue however on which information has not trickled down in time from the top to lesser luminaries in the Congress(I).

When many leaders lashed out against the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, for dining with Mr Adnan Khashoggi, the international arms merchant, while on a visit to New Delhi last week, the AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-I] spokesman himself disclosed that the "distinguished visitor" from abroad and his entourage called on Mr Rajiv Gandhi himself.

Sharp Contrast

The air corridor, refuelling and other undisclosed facilities that India extends to the armed forces of the United States contrast sharply with the strong resistance that the late Indira Gandhi had put up in the 1970s against the conversion of the tiny Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia into an American military base.

India's (as well as of a number of other nations') protests could not prevent the conversion of Diego Garcia into a strategic operational base but so long as Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister, Indo-U.S. relations were cool. Their mutual ties had hit the bottom during the Bangladesh liberation struggle in 1971.

Measure of Cordiality

But a thaw began soon after Mr Rajiv Gandhi took over as Prime Minister. The two visits that he paid to the United States soon after taking over the reins helped dispel earlier doubts and suspicions and even succeeded in restoring a measure of cordiality. Without allowing the close ties between India and the Soviet Union to suffer in any manner, Mr Gandhi succeeded in removing the cobwebs of mistrust.

Informed sources here believe that India's willingness to extend its assistance to the armed forces of the United States is part of an unwritten deal that was struck in the early days of the Rajiv regime. But apparently it was no part of the understanding that such facilities would be available on the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and a country traditionally friendly with India.

U.S. Goodwill Needed

They also believe that the warm gestures that the U.S. administration has lately been making towards India—refusal to give aid to Pakistan without satisfactory evidence that it is not building a nuclear arms manufacturing facility, for instance—are not so much out of a sudden change of attitude towards this country. The United States no longer needs Pakistan as a link in its global operations, for dramatic changes in the Soviet Union have transformed geo-political realities.

India's economic difficulties have increased its dependence on assistance from international agencies. The United States has a leverage with the World Bank and the IMF, and U.S. goodwill is important in securing hard currency from these funding agencies. The Foreign Secretary, Mr Muchkund Dubey, himself noted in the course of a television discussion recently that in formulating its stance on the Gulf war, India had to bear in mind its need for assistance from international agencies to tide over its financial difficulties.

Congress-I Resolution

91AS0627B Madras THE HINDU in English 1 Feb 91 p 6

[Text] New Delhi, 31 Jan—A specially convened meeting of the Congress(I) Working Committee [CWC] today expressed shock over what was termed a "major and fundamental departure" from India's foreign policy in granting refuelling facility for U.S. aircraft engaged in the Gulf war and demanded full facts on the controversy from the Centre.

The committee, presided over by the party president, adopted a resolution urging the Union Government to immediately suspend overflight and refuelling facilities to military aircraft of foreign countries involved in the Gulf war.

The resolution posed four questions before the Union Government and stressed on the urgent need for clarification on the subject.

First, when was the decision taken to allow U.S. military aircraft to overfly Indian airspace and accordingly to be entitled to refuelling facilities? At what level was this

decision taken? And by whom was the decision taken? What were the terms and conditions stipulated in the agreement, if any? Were any conditions stipulated in regard to inspection or verification? If so, was any drill or procedure laid down?

Secondly, were the decisions reviewed after the adoption of Resolution 678 by the Security Council on 29 November? Were they reviewed after the eruption of war on January 1991?

Thirdly, how many U.S. military aircraft have so far been permitted overflights through Indian airspace along with details of the aircraft? How many have been refuelled in Indian airports, the names of airports and the dates of such overflights/refuelling?

Fourthly, was inspection or physical verification undertaken of materials being carried by these aircraft to ascertain the nature of cargo being carried? Was any determination made as to whether the aircraft were transporting combat personnel?

A Transgression

The CWC resolution said the grant of refuelling facilities to the U.S. military aircraft was a transgression of the principles of non-alignment, the philosophy of non-violence and the primacy India had traditionally accorded to the pacific settlement of disputes.

"What is particularly objectionable is that such use of air corridors and the provision of refuelling facilities should have been continued, apparently without review, even after war erupted in West Asia. It is yet another indicator, to the growing body of evidence, of deviations and distortions that are shaking the very foundations of our foreign policy. This is unacceptable to the Indian National Congress and the country," the resolution said.

Incidentally there is not a word in the resolution of the allegations being levelled by the Congress(I) spokesman, Mr M.J. Akbar, for the last three days that the decision on refuelling had been taken by the National Front Government. At the regular briefing of the party, today Mr Akbar however stuck to his charges and said the decision had been taken by Mr V.P. Singh himself in his capacity as the Defence Minister.

Political Reactions to U.S. Plane Refueling Examined

91AS0647A Calcutta SUNDAY in English
16 Feb 91 pp 32-36

[Article by Sudeep Chakravarti, Shiraj Sidhva, Godfrey Pereira and Gauri Lankesh: "Fuelling The War"]

[Text] The Gulf. These days, four weeks into a war that threatens the region—and perhaps, the world—that is all anyone talks about in India. Are we going to be hit badly, especially as our economy is already in a terrible shape? Will our oil run out? Will prices ever stop rising? Did Chandra Shekhar do the right thing by going pro-U.S., and even allowing U.S. and allied force military aircraft to land and refuel at Indian airports? Was the government right to take an anti-Saddam stand when the public sympathy seems clearly pro-Saddam, irrespective of religious coloring?

There are other worries. Will the Shekhar government's stand affect our position as a premier non-aligned power? And why is Shekhar meddling anyway? To gain something for our country, or for himself? In the same vein, when other political parties either support or debunk the Shekhar line are they doing so with India's interests at heart? And how will India fit into a post-war scenario?

Presently, the situation is too fluid to arrive at firm conclusions. Or definite projections. But there are indications of the way things may turn out, for India and the world. For the past one month, Sunday correspondents have been trying to piece together events and their possible consequences, through exhaustive cover features and special reports.

This week, we have an update on the position after a month's war in the Gulf, its impact on India and what could happen in the future. Beginning with the refuelling controversy, reactions, the situation in the Gulf and in the country which coordinated the whole show: the U.S. On-the-spot reports from Sreedhar Pillay in the Gulf, Siddharth Dube in the United States and our team in India: Shiraz Sidhva and Sudeep Chakravarti in New Delhi, Godfrey Pereira in Bombay and Gauri Lankesh in Madras. Since 9 January, U.S. military aircraft, C-141 Starlifters, have been landing at Bombay's Sahar International Airport, about three a day, picking up an average of 51,000 liters of aviation turbine fuel per plane. On their way to either Fujairah in the Gulf from U.S. air bases in the Philippines, or on the way back. The facilities were granted before war broke out in the Gulf and under orders from the Government of India. (Air India has been appointed handling agents for U.S. military aircraft passing through India. "I do not want to say anything about the refuelling that is being done by the American aircraft," says the airline's acting chairman and managing director. He adds: "It is a government decision and only they can answer questions pertaining to these situations.")

Similar orders, from air headquarters to airport authorities, were also despatched to Madras' international airport early this year, and since 11 January, U.S. military transport aircraft have been making a beeline for Madras too. These aircraft were mostly on fights between Bangkok and Bahrain, in the Gulf. And now, even U.S. and Australian naval aircraft have joined the queue.

All this was done openly, both at Bombay and Madras. So openly, in fact, that it was easy enough for media photographers to take pictures of these planes parked on the tarmac, taking off and refuelling. It is also clear that these transit flights will not stop. At least, not for the

duration of the Gulf war. "I don't have information that suggests anything to the contrary," says a minister in Chandra Shekhar's government. He adds: "We are doing what we think is right. India has to wake up to new realities."

New realities, as far as the Chandra Shekhar government is concerned, mean reversing what Indian foreign policy has held sacred, more or less, since Independence. That India is a peaceful nation. That India is non-aligned, a co-founder of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and will not take sides in a conflict that is not its own. That the United States' interests do not match India's and our country is much better off with the Soviets. That India is firmly pro-Arab and pro-Palestine. And the fact that Iraq is India's friend and has supported us—despite criticism from other Arab or Islamic countries—on the Kashmir issue.

With the exception of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), all Indian political parties have strongly criticized this apparent change of stance by Shekhar's Janata Dal(S) government. The PM [prime minister] had said publicly at the outbreak of the war that it could only stop with an Iraqi pull-out from Kuwait, which was considered bad enough by politicos, but allowing an aggressor's planes to refuel in India is now being regarded as an indirect act of war.

"By adopting a policy like this," says Romesh Bhandari, convenor of the All India Congress Committee(I) [AICC] foreign affairs cell, former foreign secretary and currently, the chief Shekhar baiter on foreign policy, "we have, in fact, become a party to military designs anywhere and this is what the issue is all about. We have always been so staunchly non-aligned, that for us to undertake such a change puts us in the category of an indirect alliance with the United States." Adds K. P. Unnikrishnan, former minister in the V. P. Singh Cabinet: "It's (the aircraft refuelling) a disgrace and should be stopped immediately." The left parties have been even more virulent, though mainly through actions, which include sponsoring effigy burnings of U.S. President George Bush and Chandra Shekhar.

BJP officials, meeting in Jaipur last week for the party's plenary session, took a fairly neutral stand on the whole issue, perhaps waiting for the crisis to either burn itself out or develop into a full-blown one before taking a firm stand. Till now, however, the BJP has neither criticized the U.S. nor censured the more militant members of its fold who paint Saddam Hussein in the colors of a dangerous Islamic fanatic. In fact, it has gone so far as to slam the Congress. Said Atal Behari Vajpayee, BJP leader and foreign minister with the 1977 Janata regime: "For Mr Rajiv Gandhi to accuse Mr Chandra Shekhar of violating the fundamentals of foreign policy is something preposterous."

Vajpayee may have a point. And he may be trying to say more than he is letting on. For starters, Indo-U.S. relations—at least in the diplomatic arena—did not take off suddenly. "Our relation with America," says Bashiruddin Ahmad, political scientist and research professor with New Delhi's Center for Policy Research, and independent think-tank, "has been changing for the past three years or so (beginning with the time Rajiv Gandhi was PM)." He adds: "And the decision to refuel the aircraft actually predates the Gulf war."

Ahmad is right on both counts, though political parties are trying to play pass-the-buck on the issue. After decades of a stand-off with the United States—thanks to the Cold War, India's tilt towards the USSR, the U.S. pro-Pakistan line and so on—relations began to warm up when Rajiv paid a call on the then U.S. President Ronald Reagan in 1987. A fall-out: the sale to India of the Cray supercomputer and even an offer to help build our country's proposed Light Combat Aircraft. Though India and the United States differed on trade practices—they still do—it appeared that the two countries were coming closer in other spheres. Subsequently, the then U.S. defence secretary Caspar Weinberger visited India and Rajiv's post-V.P. defence minister, K. C. Pant, returned the courtesy. A defence protocol is believed to have been signed during that time, which basically said that India would look after U.S. requirements in the region, if ever the need arose. "It is said," says Unnikrishnan, "that this included certain facilities to the U.S. Air Force, Navy and military personnel. What was worse, India had also agreed not to make a noise about (the U.S. staging area in the Indian Ocean island of) Diego Garcia."

But the Congress is taking a different view. It lays the blame at V.P. Singh's door for agreeing to permit overflights. Also, at Shekhar's for actually allowing both overflights and refuelling facilities. "All the Congress(I) criticism loses relevance in light of the findings of the last (week)," says Inder Kumar Gujral, foreign minister in the V. P. Singh Cabinet. "The accusations were all polemics and they were trying to take advantage of the situation."

This is significant. Because, it takes care of V.P. Singh's role in the whole deal. It also lends another dimension to the fracas: that Rajiv knew about what Shekhar's government had planned to do all along, but has adopted a huffy, hurt public stand with an eye on the Muslim vote-bank. And because it gives him an opportunity to undercut Shekhar's growing influence within the government. Says Gujral: "I see no particular logic or political morality in what the Congress(I) is doing."

Whatever the machinations, it is quite clear now that as long as Shekhar continues as PM—and perhaps, even after—India's tilt is going to remain pro-U.S. On the one hand, this may seem like a crazy move because it gives up on everything that Indian foreign policy has held to be holy all these years. On the other hand, it could also be a desperate gamble on India's part to get out of an economic mess, as well as become a major force in the region, not just South Asia, but east of the Mediterranean. The second motive does have a glimmer of truth—

while there is a lobby within the external affairs ministry that abhors what the government is doing now, there is also another which has been nurturing pro-U.S. sentiments for close on five years, angling for a position in a wold in which the USSR has less say every day. Shekhar has fully utilized the brains of the modernist lobby, say ministry sources.

The gamble could be well worth it. If India sticks by the United States, then Washington is certain to give us pre-eminence in its world-view. Also, it is already paying off in some ways. Nobody—Indian or U.S. officials—denies any longer that one reason India received U.S. $1.8 billion (Rs [rupees] 3,279 crores) in emergency assistance from the International Monetary Fund was because the United States pushed it. The loan came through after the Gulf war broke out. Around the same time, the United States announced that it would be cutting last year's U.S. $550 million aid to Pakistan by more than half.

The allies will win, militarily, if not in the eyes of the world. And eventually establish a hold over the region. When this happens, India need never fear for oil for a long time. It need also—say war watchers—never fear about loans and aid from Western countries, especially the United States. Indian exports may find it easier to cross trade barriers in the West. India may receive more technological help from the West. A Saddam-free Kuwait and even Saudi Arabia could keep Indian project exporters in gravy for years and ensure jobs for an increasing number of Indian expatriates in the Gulf. The list is practically endless.

There is a danger, however. "There are enough people in South Block," says a top Indian defence analyst who declines to be identified, "who believe that Pakistan is in the boondocks as far as the United States is concerned and that we can step into its place. But what they forget was that Pakistan's was always a subservient status. I shudder to think what the consequence would be if we started that kind of relationship with the United States." He adds: "The whole idea that there is one superpower and that we have to pander to its whims is not right."

Point and counter-point. That is the essence of all diplomatic and political manoeuvering. And Chandra Shekhar seems to be going right ahead with whatever he thinks are India's economic and geo-political goals. It is too early yet to say what the outcome for our country will be, good or bad. But the decision to refuel the aircraft shows that this government believes it is a risk worth taking.

Political Parties Take Varying Stands

Janata Dal(S) [JD] (Chandra Shekhar). In the hot seat, but sticking to its stand that allowing U.S. military transport aircraft to stop over, refuel in and overfly India is perfectly okay. Cleared the move on 2 January, a week before the first plane bound for the Gulf landed in Bombay and a fortnight before war broke out.

Shekhar is deflecting all criticism for his actions by saying he is doing what he thinks is right. India had better wake up to new geo-political realities, he says. Also, goes the JD(S) line, the moves to allow U.S. planes to use facilities in India were going on when the Raja was PM, around September last year. And the tilt towards the United States began when Rajiv was premier, and the decision was actually taken during that time. All we have done, says the JD(S), is okayed what was already okayed. So, why all the fuss?

The Left (Jyoti Basu). Allowing U.S. planes to refuel in India is the most heinous thing that Shekhar could have done, feels the left. Its line is: we have always backed the USSR and all Indian governments have also looked to that country for succor. And we always keep quiet. When Saddam Husayn walked into Kuwait, we kept our mouths shut. When the USSR walked into Afghanistan, we didn't say a thing. But when the U.S. played havoc in Vietnam—no matter that the Soviets were backing the other side—we screamed murder. Ditto when the U.S. walked into Grenada. And now, we do not like what is happening in the Gulf.

The left maintains that Shekhar is an imperialist stooge and he has proved that twice over: once, by asking Iraq to leave Kuwait, and again, by allowing U.S. planes facilities in India.

BJP (M.M. Joshi). The BJP does not say that Shekhar is a good man and a good PM. But he is doing exactly what it would have done if it had been in power. Perhaps, it would go even further with a pro-U.S. stand—who does Saddam Husayn think he is, anyway—by publicly stating that it supports what the United States is doing. And not compromise in any way.

Global realities are changing, Indian political realities are changing, we are pro-business, and India needs money, powerful friends and oil, says the BJP. We want to be part of every equation and even try to control the situation. Who is Rajiv Gandhi? Or V. P. Singh? Or the left? Even, who is Chandra Shekhar? But on this count, he has done no wrong. We will not say it outright, but there it is, declare BJP members.

Janata Dal (V. P. Singh). Chandra Shekhar is crazy, maintains the Janata Dal. He has thrown away India's credibility by one action. Doesn't he know that he has reversed our foreign policy? Our foreign minister went to pay homage to Saddam Husayn after he took over Kuwait and this lot goes pro-U.S.? Shekhar is a pretender. He took us for a ride and now, he is taking India for a rise, is the Dal line.

Who says we agreed to allow U.S. military planes to refuel in or overfly India? We would never indulge in this sort of a thing, this virtual participation in an act of war, say Dal members indignantly. Even if we did not dispute the agreement, the point is that the Congress(I) regime was responsible for the whole thing. And now, their stooge has gone ahead and implemented it, point out Dal men.

Congress(I) (Rajiv Gandhi). A terrible thing to do, allowing U.S. planes to refuel in India. It detracts from—actually, destroys—India's stand as a nonaligned nation and has put the country on a dangerous path, feels the Congress. How could New Delhi have taken such a decision, especially when it is a "minority" government? The government has no idea about what it is doing.

The Congress seems to be a little confused. On the one hand, it denies taking any such decision as alleged by Shekhar when it was in power. It is all the handiwork of V. P. Singh, says the party. So, it is not responsible. On the other hand, it says that it may have taken the decision and the Raja may have strengthened the agreement with the Unied States, but the least Shekhar could have done was to review the decision and say no, as this is a war-time situation.

Poll Samples Attitudes on Gulf War

91AS0640A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 19 Jan 91 pp 1, 3

[Text] Barely 12 hours after the commencement of "Operation Desert Storm" the Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB)—the largest market research organisation in India—swung into action with an opinion poll in the five largest cities.

Teams of IMRB interviewers contacted men and women at street corners in Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Bangalore. The findings of the poll have been weighted by city, sex and income to ensure that they are representative of the population across the five cities.

Was Mr Saddam Husayn right in invading Kuwait?

A large proportion (60 percent) of those contacted in the opinion poll feel that Iraq was not justified in invading Kuwait in August last year.

There were no major differences across the five cities.

Do you think Iraq was right in invading Kuwait 5 months ago?

	(%)
Yes	21
No	60
Not Sure	19

Was peace given a chance?

In response to the question whether the United Nations had given sufficient time for a peaceful solution to the problem, most of the respondents (65 percent) believed that this was so. Some Calcuttans, however, would have preferred if more time were given.

Do you think the United Nations had given sufficient time and opportunity for a peaceful solution to the problem?

	All cities (%)	Calcutta (%)
Yes	65	45
No	22	32
Can't Say	13	23

What will be the result of the war?

Over 70 percent of the respondents felt that the result of the war would be Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait or a compromise solution. Calcuttans, however, believe that compromise is the most likely scenario.

	All cities (%)	Calcutta (%)
Iraq will withdraw from Kuwait	30	12
Iraq will retain Kuwait	25	25
There will eventually be some compromise	41	57
Can't say	4	6

Will it develop into an Arab-Israeli war?

Opinions were fairly divided on the issue of whether this conflict would escalate into an Arab-Israeli war, with a large number of responents not stating any opinions.

Do you think it will develop into an Arab-Israeli war?

	(%)
Yes	38
No	34
Can't say	28

When will it end?

Opinion is divided about how long the war will last. While 47 percent feel that it will be over within a fortnight, as many as 27 percent feel that it will last over a month.

How long will the war last?

	(%)
Less than a week	22
1-2 weeks	25
2 weeks to a month	20
More than a month	27
Can't say	6

Should India remain neutral?

Indian public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of India being neutral in the Gulf led and not supporting either Mr Saddam Husayn or the U.S.-based forces.

	(%)
India should support Iraq	12
India should support the U.S. forces and its allies	17
India should remain neutral	71

What would be the effect on the Indian economy?

Most (57 percent) of the respondents are convinced that India's economy would be affected very badly.

What in your opinion will be the effect of the war on India's economy? Will it affect it...

	(%)
Very badly	57
Somewhat	35
Not at all	7

In specific terms, most respondents apprehend severe price rises (63 percent) and shortages of petrol (49 percent).

Being a night war, it was TV and radio which were the first sources of information for most Indians. Foreign radio listenership, notably the BBC hit perhaps a new high. Purveyors of the news:

	(%)
TV	33
Radio	24
AIR	(15)
BBC	(5)
Others	(4)
Newspapers	25
Friends/relatives	18

The IMRB attempted analysis across several parameters to ascertain how opinion varied across cities, income groups and men vis-a-vis women. No discernible differences were observed. Approximately 10 percent of the sample constituted Muslims (Sample size—117).

There appears to be some sympathy towards Mr Husayn and the Iraqi position. This is discernible from the analysis shown below comparing views of all respondents vis-a-vis Muslim respondents.

	All respondents (%)	Muslims (%)
Iraq was right in invading Kuwait	21	49
Iraq will retain Kuwait	25	41
It will develop into an Arab-Israeli War	38	50
India should support Iraq	12	30

Iraqi, PLO Envoys to New Delhi Interviewed

91AS0631A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 2 Feb 91 p 20

[Text] New Delhi, 1 Feb (The Times of India News Service)—Mrs Saddam Husayn is going about armed, like other Iraqi women, says their ambassador here, Dr Abdul Wadood Shiekhly.

Mr Husayn's family has not fled Iraq, and reports suggesting Mrs Husayn is in Switzerland, Zambia, Mauritania, etc. are American propaganda, he adds. The ambassador was speaking at a symposium organised by the Indo-Iraq Friendship Society on the Gulf war here on Wednesday.

"For the past 18 months a campaign has been launched against Iraq... They say we have nuclear heads whereas we don't, they say we have our own 100 capacitors (a component essential for any triggering mechanism), but it is the Americans who sold these to us... They say we have superguns... All this is for the consumption of their own people and the ignorant, it is sheer propaganda. We are a peace loving country and we are not thirsty for blood..." said Dr Shiekhly.

On the controversial refuelling of American planes in Bombay, the ambassador said, "It's unfortunate. A pity that the planes, which are part of the bloody American war machinery killing infants, babies and innocents were allowed."

"I do not want to interfere in your country's internal matters. It is unfortunate that this has happened at this time, when India, a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, is trying for an early resolution of the Gulf crisis," he said. "Whatever the excuses, leave this question for the people to judge. Is it fair to be with the killers? Is this fair when your brothers and sisters are being killed,", asked an emotional Dr Shiekhly.

"Everyday I have been getting calls, letters and telegrams from hundreds of Indians, pledging solidarity with Iraq. Many have offered to join the army... The news of the refuelling of planes has disturbed them... The majority of the people are against your helping the killers," he said.

Responding to a question on how long Iraq will be able to put up a fight, the envoy said confidently, "Iraq is going to stand firm, courageously for days, months, years, for all times, for any challenge. The Iraqis cannot accept any threats, we prefer death with dignity to life without it."

The envoy made it clear that the Palestine question is item number one on their agenda. Any initiative that may come from any country or organisation has to be based on this, he said. "The battle, say the forces, is for humanity. But then don't the Palestinians have rights, are they not humans?," he asked. "Why are there no sanctions against the Israelis? Why is there no embargo?

Are the countries of the world deaf or blind? Why don't they do something?" were some of the questions he raised.

"The battle is not Iraq's alone, it is ours," said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) ambassador, Dr Khalid El Sheikh. "Each one of us today is a Saddam Husayn. If Iraq is defeated, each peace loving person will be defeated... American imperialism will dominate the world," he warned.

"The sons of Iraq," said the PLO envoy, "are making history for Arabs, for humanity at large. They are not only defeating the arrogance of the United States but their high-tech too."

Paper Reports on Kuwaiti Minister's Visit

91AS0664 Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 8 Feb 91 p 4

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 7 February: The Kuwaiti minister of state for Cabinet affairs, Mr 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Awadhi, today hailed India's stand on the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from the emirate and its agreeing to play an important role in its reconstruction.

Mr al-'Awadhi, who is here as the special envoy of the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, conveyed his government's appreciation of the Indian stand on the Gulf crisis when he met the deputy minister for external affairs, Mr Digvijay Singh. The deputy minister reiterated India's firm commitment to the UN Security Council's resolutions and assured Mr al-'Awadhi of all support in Kuwait's reconstruction.

The special envoy later called on the President, Mr R. Venkataraman, and the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar. He delivered a message from the emir which said "Iraq has not responded to any peace proposals." It also carries a request from the Kuwaiti ruler asking India for assistance for post-war reconstruction. He said the Emir appreciated India's help and cooperation.

Mr Venkataraman stressed the need for an early peaceful solution to bring an end to the destruction of life and human suffering caused by war. He said India stood for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the light of the UN resolution.

'India should help Allies:' The Saudi ambassador, Sheikh Fouad S. Moufti, today said India should give more active assistance including providing "facilities" to the Allied forces in their bid to liberate Kuwait, PTI adds.

"Such an assistance would be within the ambit of the United Nations Security Council resolution 678," he said. The Sri Lankan government has already taken such a course of action, he added.

Sheikh Fouad said India has always supported the cause of liberation whether it was Palestine, Zimbabwe or South Africa, and it was India's responsibility to help Kuwait.

Indo-Soviet talks: Soviet deputy foreign minister, Mr Igor Rogachev, arrived here today on a three-day visit for discussions with Indian leaders on peace proposals to bring an early end to the Gulf war, UNI reports.

Mr Rogachev will call on the external affairs minister, Mr V.C. Shukla, and have detailed discussions with the foreign secretary, Mr Muchkund Dubey, tomorrow.

Soon after his arrival, Mr Rogachev had a meeting with the Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

China rules out peace initiative: China today ruled out any peace initiative to end the Gulf war until the Iraqi President, Mr Saddam Husayn, showed signs of withdrawing troops from Kuwait.

The Chinese Vice-Premier, Mr Wu Xueqian during his hour-long meeting with the commerce minister, Dr Subramaniam Swamy, said conditions in the Gulf were not conducive for peace initiatives unless Mr Saddam announced his intention on troops withdrawal.

PLO Special Envoy Meets With Press

91AS0676A Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 3 Feb 91 p 7

[Text] New Delhi, 2 February: Mr Jamal Sourani, the special envoy of the PLO leader, Mr Yasser 'Arafat, has apparently come here with a brief to see India "activate" itself in joining the efforts to end the Gulf crisis. The PLO also seems to find NAM [Nonaligned Movement] wanting in its peace initiatives so far.

In fact he opposed the 12 February meeting of NAM Foreign Minister. As for the role of the non-aligned movement, Mr Sourani said that the PLO would like a meeting of the presidential office of the NAM bureau to be called; the idea of "selective" nation's meeting would only "deviate" attention from the issues involved.

That the PLO feels that so far India had not been "active" enough—in accordance with its status as a founder member of the non-aligned movement and an old friend of the Arabs—was evident from the tone of Mr Sourani's statement at the Press conference that he addressed here today. He clearly stressed that India should not only be more "active" in the peace efforts, but as a major power of the area the country should defend the "region" and the rights of the people there.

He said India had always played a role in solving crisis in the region in the past and hoped that it would continue to do so. While asking for an "active" role, Mr Sourani said India was in a position to give "life" to NAM to find a way for a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the Gulf problem and a ceasefire in the current war.

He was bitter against the U.S. role in the Gulf. He thought the USA was fighting a war only to gain control of the petrol produced in the area. He accused the USA of trying to "ruin" Iraq in the name of implementing the U.N. Security Council resolution calling for the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Replying to a question, he said that the PLO supported withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. But the PLO also wanted all foreign troops out of the Gulf war theatre.

Mr Sourani added that a solution to the Gulf problem was possible under an Arab "umbrella" held under the aegis of the United Nations.

Indian, Afghan Foreign Ministers Hold Talks

91AS0665 New Delhi PATRIOT in English 9 Feb 91 p 5

[Text] India has decided to convert into a grant 50,000 tonnes of wheat it had promised to provide Afghanistan last year on credit, in view of the devastating earthquake recently in that country, reports UNI.

This was conveyed to Afghan Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil by External Affairs Minister V.C. Shukla at the official talks on Friday.

A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry later said Mr Wakil shared India's concern over the Gulf war and appreciated its efforts through the nonaligned forum to end hostilities.

The Afghan Foreign Minister expressed a desire to be associated with the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] initiative.

Earlier, Mr Shukla emphasised the NAM had been activated for solving a suitable framework for a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

He said India had tried till the last moment to prevent outbreak of war and even after fighting began it had been pressing for ceasing it on the basis of Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and restoration of its sovereignty and legitimate Government.

Earlier, welcoming Mr Wakil, Mr Shukla said there was consensus in India among political parties about the value of good relations with Afghanistan and assured him his Government's determination to strengthen the longstanding Indo-Afghan cooperative relations for mutual benefit.

The External Affairs Minister said Afghan President Najibullah's visit to India last year had provided a major impetus to bilateral relations.

He said the decisions of the ninth meeting of the Indo-Afghan joint commission in June last had given a new momentum to their cooperative arrangements.

Mr Shukla assured Mr Wakil of India's intention to expand and diversify its relationship with Afghanistan.

The Afghan delegation said it was gratifying that friendship between India and Afghanistan had remained unchanged despite political changes in both countries.

The spokesman said both sides underlined the need for regular exchange of views in view of rapid developments taking place in the region.

Results of Commerce Minister's PRC Visit

Trade Protocol Signed

91AS0669A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 9 Feb 91 p 15

[Text] Beijing, 8 February (PTI): India and China have agreed that the present level of bilateral trade was below potential and added new commodities to their exchange, raised quantities of others, agreed to resume border trade, exchange technologies and promote joint ventures.

Visiting commerce minister Subramanian Swamy and Chinese minister of foreign economic relations and trade Li Lanqing and senior officials of the two sides signed the agreed minutes of their talks and a trade protocol for a year beginning from 8 February.

In what Mr Swamy described as a 'major breakthrough,' India obtained for the first time from China the promise of a one-time shipment of up to 50,000 tons of badly needed coking coal.

India also lined up options to import up to five million dollars worth of petroleum products, extracted a Chinese accord to by up to 1.2 million tons of iron ore from India and China agreed to sell up to 2,500 tons of raw silk and silk yarn.

China also agreed to buy 100,000 tons of chrome ore as well as other ores besides several agriculture products, dyes, chemicals and engineering products, notably oil field equipment, electronic components and software, textile machinery, telecommunication equipment and pharmaceutical equipment.

China will also buy 300,000 tons of urea, plywood and synthetic fibre.

India will buy resin, fresh water peargs, mercury, antimony, pig iron and pharmaceuticals.

In an important departure, the two sides specifically agreed to balance the trade that has for long weighed heavily in China's favour and agreed to attempt direct trade on a bigger scale as well as counter trade.

Significantly, the two countries agreed to enter into joint ventures in steel, metallurgy, petrochemicals, energy and water conservancy.

They named a specific instance of technology sharing, namely Chinese blast furnace technology in exchange for India's sponge (direct reduction) iron knowhow.

A recognition of India's strides in the telecommunications sector came in the form of Chinese readiness to receive a delegation to demonstrate the rural exchanges developed by C-Dot.

India's offer of engineering consultancy, especially in railways was accepted by the Chinese side which noted that the World Bank had recommended Indian expertise.

India invited a civil aviation delegation from China to discuss starting an airline link. India expressed a desire to open an office of the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC) in China.

The two sides also agreed to consider joint bidding for World Bank and other international institutions bids and joint ventures for import substitution.

In agriculture, the two sides decided to exchange technologies in cotton seed, dryland farming and high yield sugar cane while in the engineering sector, China expressed a desire for automobile components and pollution control knowhow.

They also agreed to cooperate in the field of medical equipment and pharmaceuticals as well as in the general service and general science and technology research and development.

The two countries also desire direct banking contact and in this context, Mr Swamy told reporters that a problem with assets dating back to 1962 when such contacts were suspended, would not be difficult to solve.

China appreciated Indian support for its reentry into the general agreement on tariffs and trade (GATT). China was one of the founders of GATT but the Guomindang regime quit the world arrangement after the communist party liberated China in 1949.

The two countries also decided to coordinate their stands in multi-lateral forums.

Dr Swamy said in an interview to All India Radio that he expected the protocol signed to boost trade to about 300 million dollars and that it could go up to one billion dollars in about three years.

Trade Increase Expected

91AS0669B Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 12 Feb 91 p 6

[Text] New Delhi, 11 February (PTI): Trade between India and China is expected to take a giant leap touching $1 billion in three years. It may quadruple to $300 million from the present $80 million in a year from now, according to the Union minister for commerce, Dr Subramanian Swamy.

This optimism flows from a series of agreements on joint ventures, resumption of border trade, exchange of technologies in several areas and trade in new commodities, signed during the just concluded visit of the commerce minister to China.

Talking to newsmen here today, Dr Swamy said India had also lined up options to import up to $5 million worth of petroleum products and extracted a Chinese accord to buy up to 1.2 million tonnes of iron ore from India.

He said China had agreed to sell up to 1,500 tonnes of raw silk and silk yarn to India. In a significant departure, the two sides agreed to balance trade, which has so far weighed heavily in Beijing's favour.

Dr Swamy, who described his visit as a "major breakthrough" in Sino-Indian relations apprised the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, of his talks with Chinese leaders, soon after this return.

Dr Swamy pointed out that India had been importing coking coal from Australia even though Chinese coking coal was of a better quality. The two countries have agreed to enter into a joint venture with equity participation, for extracting coking coal in China.

He said in the mines so extracted, India would have the first option to buy coking coal. Similarly, India had agreed to allow China to help extract high quality iron ore in India. India has contracted to sell 1.25 million tonnes of iron ore to China in a year's time.

Correspondent on Indo-Sri Lankan Talks

91AS0636A Madras THE HINDU in English 30 Jan 91 p 9

[Article by Thomas Abraham]

[Text] Colombo, 29 Jan—The first round of official talks between India and Sri Lanka went off extremely well in an atmosphere that was free from the suspicion and animosity that had characterised relations between the two countries, Indian and Sri Lankan diplomats reported.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr V.C. Shukla and his counterpart Mr Harold Herat, held three and a half hours of talks this morning during which everything from the Gulf crisis to the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, and the problems of Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu were discussed. "All subjects were discussed. Nothing was taboo. Nothing was objected to by either party," said the Foreign Secretary, Mr Muchkund Dubey. Few specific agreements emerged from the discussions, which were designed for an exchange of views rather than to formulate plans of action, but what was remarkable was that both sides were able to discuss potentially contentious issues in an atmosphere free of rancour or bitterness.

Upgrade Commission

Both sides did however agree to upgrade the joint economic commission to a joint commission with sub commissions on trade, investments and finance, and on social and cultural exchanges. The two countries are also expected to announce agreements on joint oil prospecting in the Gulf of Mannar, and on the import of Sri Lankan tea to India.

Though the Indian delegation described in some detail the recent initiatives to bring peace to the Gulf, the major part of the discussions dealt with bilateral issues including the ethnic conflict, efforts to bring about a political solution through the all-party conference, and the devolution of power. As far as the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement was concerned, the Sri Lankan side acknowledged its continued relevance, and so defused any potential disagreement with India. Mr Harold Herat made the Sri Lankan position on the accord clear by reading out the United National Party's election manifesto, which accepted the importance of the agreement.

India made the point that the devolution package needed to be improved, and the Sri Lankan side agreed to this, and also explained the problems it faced, and how it intended to overcome them. The efforts that were being made through the all parties conference to reach a political solution to the problems of the north and east were also discussed in some detail.

Refugees

The problem of Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu also figured prominently, and Mr Dubey told presspersons that the two sides had discussed ways to create the conditions necessary for a large-scale return of refugees. Sri Lankan diplomats said their country had suggested that the refugees in Tamil Nadu be first interviewed and classified according to which parts of the north and east of Sri Lanka they came from. This would make it possible to send back people who came from areas which were relatively peaceful.

As far as the north and east was concerned, India made the points it wanted to make on the relevance of accord and the need for a peaceful solution to the problem, but was broadly supportive of the Sri Lankan Government's efforts to find a solution through the all parties conference. According to those who were present at the meeting, India emphasised the need for a peaceful solution, but did not make any specific suggestions to Sri Lanka.

Bilateral Trade

Both countries were in favour of stepping up bilateral trade, and saw it as a way to lay the groundwork for better political relations. "We generally agreed that upgrading the economic and commercial relations would itself have a beneficial effect for the overall political climate," Mr Dubey said.

Mr Shukla later met representatives of the non-LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] Tamil groups who briefed him on the need for the Sri Lankan Government to fulfil certain basic demands of the Tamils, such as the devolution of power to the north and east, and the repeal of the sixth amendment to the Constitution. The External Affairs Minister then met Mr A.C.S. Hameed, Minister for Justice, who briefed him on the earlier negotiations between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. He then met the Minister of State for Defence, Mr Ranjan Wijeratne, for a briefing on the conflict in the north and east.

Most Important Part

The most important part of Mr Shukla's visit comes tomorrow when he meets the President, Mr R. Premadasa. The President determines foreign policy, and any forward movement in ties between the two countries will really only come if tomorrow's talks are as cordial as today's were.

The Indian side seems to be taking great care to avoid any impression that it is acting as a "big brother," and Sri Lanka has reciprocated by discussing in detail issues which are of concern to India. Diplomats from both countries reported that the atmosphere of cordiality in today's talks was remarkable.

Kashmir Militants Offer Talks With Center

91AS0663A Madras THE HINDU in English 20 Feb 91 p 9

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 19 February: For the first time since militancy began in the Kashmir Valley, an outlawed organisation has spoken of some kind of dialogue with the Central Government. But the "welcome" extended by the banned Jamaat-i-Islami from Srinagar to the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar's "offer" for talks is riddled with conditions.

Official sources said the organisation's "offer" for talks was on the Kashmir "dispute," hinting clearly at the perceived international nature of the problem. According to the sources, a "wait and watch" attitude would be in order following the statement made by the Jamaat in Srinagar.

According to reports from Srinagar, the outlawed organisation has said it was also ready to discuss the United Nations Security Council resolution on Kashmir. A five-point charter of demand has also been put forward.

The reports said the conditions include immediate release of all detained leaders belonging to banned and militant groups, lifting of the ban on outlawed organisations and withdrawal of all security forces from the Valley.

The sources said the "offer" extended by the Jamaat was significant in that it came from a banned group and not

a "militant" one. According to them, the reaction of militant groups to the "offer" of the Jamaat would be worth watching.

They maintained that the Jamaat, known to be a fundamentalist front, has always projected a more "reasonable" public image. It may be recalled that many of their leaders, some of them in detention at the moment, have been MLAs [Members of Legislative Assembly] and had been active in public life.

The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which has been spearheading militant activities since December 1989, has already rejected the "offer" of talks extended by the Prime Minister.

Trying to 'usurp' leadership: According to the sources, the Jamaat, known to have a much narrower support base than the JKLF, is trying to "usurp" the leadership of the movement. The statement issued by the organisation is seen as an attempt to gain greater advantage.

As far as the conditions imposed are concerned, the withdrawal of security forces from the Valley is unlikely to be conceded by the Central Government. It has all along maintained that negotiations with the militants can only be from a "position of strength."

The lifting of the ban and release of both political and militant leaders is another aspect which is unlikely to touch a supportive chord in Government echelons here.

The Jamaat is known to have a hard-line, fundamentalist approach to the Kashmir question. Its chief difference with the more broad-based JKLF relates to the stated preference of the latter for "independence."

The Jamaat all along has said that it is for merger with Pakistan. One of the principal fundamentalist outfits, the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, is known to be linked with the Jamaat.

Reportage on Rajiv Letters to Shekhar

Letter on Punjab

91AS0635A Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Jan 91 p 4

[Text] New Delhi, 25 Jan—The Congress(I) President, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has criticised the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, for his dialogue with the chief of the United Akali Dal(M), Mr Simranjit Singh Mann, without any preconditions and said the situation in Punjab far from showing any signs of improvement has worsened in the last few days.

In a letter to the Prime Minister on the eve of the proposed Punjab bandh [strike] by the Panthic Committee tomorrow, Mr Gandhi said the Government must be absolutely clear about its objectives, the immediate tasks and strategic steps to be taken during the implementation of a total plan of action. Absence of such an action plan was leading to mistakes by the Government in Punjab.

The letter said "It is one thing to have contacts with insurgents and terrorists at intelligence and police levels, quite another for a Head of Government to engage himself in talks without preconditions with parties dedicated to the dismemberment of India and worse actually allow the question of dismemberment of the country to be part of the agenda.

"We always made it abundantly clear that negotiations would be held only within the framework of the Constitution and only after violence was abjured. You chose to lay down neither condition. The result is that while you claim that Mr Mann did not raise the question of Khalistan with you, he is having a field day spreading the message that you have yielded to their main demand."

The letter referred to the speech of the Prime Minister in Chandigarh and said wittingly or unwittingly it has been misconstrued by the Akali Dal factions led by the United Akali Dal(M). Mr Mann had said he has called off the rally scheduled on 26 January as the government was prepared to talk to him about Khalistan.

No Quickfix Solution

Mr Gandhi said "there is no quickfix solution for Punjab. And the experience of the previous Government has shown that nothing can so damage the long-term prospects for a solution as empty gestures. It is extremely important that the terrorists and secessionists, their political supporters and the nation know that we are prepared, if needed, for a long haul and will not compromise the integrity of the nation to secure respite from terrorism in Punjab."

The letter said the need to neither give in nor have the people of Punjab give in to the threats of militants cannot be over-emphasised. The pusillanimity with which the Government has been succumbing to the militants was most distressing and potentially suicidal. "You will have to carry conviction with the people in Punjab that it is you and not the Panthic Committee that is the Government in Punjab."

'Khalistan' Currency in Circulation

Underscoring the need to ensure that the Panthic Committee bandh does not succeed the letter said the morale in Punjab has plummeted so low and the signals emanating from the Government are so confusing that if the bandh succeeds it would have the most deleterious consequences.

Mr Gandhi said there appeared to be a virtual take-over of the Jalandhar station of Doordarshan by the militants.

The 'Khalistan' currency was being circulated and shopkeepers were threatened that after 26 January they will have to undertake all transactions in 'Khalistani currency.'

Extortion and kidnapping for ransom have assumed alarming proportions. Unless the highest priority was accorded to tackle the situation, there will be an exodus of industrialists from the State.

Letter on Gulf

91AS0635B Madras THE HINDU in English 30 Jan 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 29 Jan—The Congress(I) President, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has urged the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, to direct the Indian Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) to ask for a meeting of the Security Council immediately to review the progress of the implementation of Resolution 678 which authorised the Member-States to use all necessary means to restore international peace and security in Kuwait.

In a long letter to the Prime Minister, third in a series after the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf, Mr Gandhi quoted excerpts from the report of the UN Secretary General to the Security Council just before the expiry of deadline for withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in support of his contention that the Multinational Forces (MNF) launched an offensive against Iraq without exhausting all means for a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

Mr Gandhi also quoted excerpts from the reply of the Soviet President, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, to the letter of the Indian Prime Minister a day before the war broke out in the Gulf. The AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-I] Foreign Affairs Cell in-charge, Mr Romesh Bhandari, who released the letter of Mr Gandhi claimed that the Congress(I) had secured Mr Gorbachev's reply from 'sources.'

The Soviet President in his reply to Mr Chandra Shekhar had said that he had learnt of the war only one hour before it broke out and he had got in contact with the American Administration and requested them to delay the action for one or two days to give him an opportunity for a last attempt to persuade the Iraqi President Mr Saddam Hussein through direct contact for withdrawal from Kuwait. "Unfortunately while we were in communication with Washington the military action had already started," the excerpt from the letter said.

The Congress(I) President expressed great anguish over what he termed as over-stepping of the original objective by the Multinational Forces (MNF) on the Gulf and said "what is evolving is not the achievement of this objective but something else."

The key paragraph in the letter reads "instead of the war being directed towards restoring Kuwait's sovereignty the main target has become Iraq. We have witnessed relentless, unprecedented and large scale destruction of civilian, economic and industrial targets besides military installations. Even the holy places of Najaf and Karbala have reportedly been hit. The archaeological and historical heritage of one of the world's oldest civilisations has been damaged."

India Cannot Wait

Mr Gandhi said the tragedy of a prolonged war must be averted and India cannot wait any further and remain a mere spectator. India and non-aligned movement (NAM) have always stressed the central role of the UN in the restoration of international peace and security wherver and whenever these have been breached.

He referred to the oil slick as a new dimension to the on-going war in the Gulf and said if allowed to spread into the Arabian Sea, the currents and winds could carry it into India's EEZ [Exclusive Economic Zone] and coastal waters with disastrous consequences to the environment and livelihood of fishermen. The Government must take up the issue with the UN Environment Programme and Security Council besides directing the relevant departments to study its effect on the monsoon, marine life and tourism.

Mr Gandhi said side by side India should be working on a plan of action individually or collectively with others, with a view to a cessation of hostilities and to bringing about a durable solution to the issues involved and aimed at sustainable peace in the region.

According to the letter the UN Secretary General in his report to the Security General had said that Mr Saddam Husayn had expressed his desire to meet him towards a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

Commentator on Letters

91AS0635C Madras THE HINDU in English 1 Feb 91 p 8

[Commentary by K.K. Katyal]

[Text] Not yet. It is tempting to interpret the latest Congress(I) postures as a prelude to withdrawal of support to the present government—and an easy snap poll—but the objective reality is not that simple. True, the Congress(I) feels uneasy in the situation it had placed itself in. True again, its president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi's public stand does not square up with his pledge to prop up a non-V.P. Singh Janata Dal set up. But neither the state of the party nor the privately expressed views of its senior leaders suggest that the fateful decision is imminent.

What does then one make out of Mr Gandhi's two letters, sent to the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, in quick succession on two sensitive issues, the Gulf war and Punjab—and their content, and tone? The relations of the two leaders are cordial and their interaction frequent. And yet Mr Gandhi chose to express himself through formal letters and promptly release them to the

press. This conscious decision, clearly, is not without a motive. What is it, if not, a move to ditch Mr Chandra Shekhar?

Before attempting an answer, the flavour of the two communications needs to be conveyed through quotes.

Benefit of the Doubt

The letter on the Gulf does give the benefit of the doubt to the present government in so far as it refers to the "11 months of neglect of our role in international affairs" and the consequent very difficult situation, inherited by Mr Chandra Shekhar. "We should have played a more significant role to prevent war and to find a peaceful solution through non-violent means. It is crucial that we be much more active now. We have lost the initiative and been reduced to hapless spectators. Whereas since the time of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, we have always been out in front contributing decisively to the moulding of world opinion, this crisis has caught us meekly following the lead given by the others.

"There is no clear articulation of what national interests of ours are jeopardised by the war in West Asia. There is no path being charted to protect, leave alone promote, these vital national interests. The great principles of our foreign policy are not being creatively applied to the emerging scenario...India is nowhere to be seen unfolding the vision of a new international order in a world that has unsheathed itself from the chrysalis of the cold war."

Mr Gandhi then talks of the priority that needs to be given to the cessation of hostilities and impliedly suggests coordination with the USSR and China "which have already indicated the top priority they attach to stopping and containing the war before it assumes the proportions of a global cataclysm."

On Talks With Mann

If there was some doubt that Mr Gandhi's criticism ws primarily directed against the erstwhile National Front rulers and not against the present Government, it is dispelled by the second letter—on Punjab. Here, the directness cannot be missed. Most of what he says is related to Mr Chandra Shekhar's talks with the Akali leader, Mr Simranjit Singh Mann, and its implications. Recalling his 14 January letter on Punjab, Mr Gandhi remarks: "I regret to say my information is that, far from showing any signs of improvement, things have only worsened in the last few days."

Then there are references to a virtual takeover of the Jalandhar station of Doordarshan (by the militants), circulation of Khalistani currency, alarming proportions assumed by extortions and kidnapping. This is how the Congress(I) leader views Mr Chandra Shekhar's talks with Mr Mann: "Your speech in Chandigarh has been wittingly or unwittingly misconstrued by the Akali Dal factions. Mr Mann has said he is calling off the rally scheduled for the 26th of January because he has understood you to have said that you are willing to talk to him about 'Khalistan'. These matters need to be clarified and understood in correct perspective.

"It is one thing to have contacts with insurgents and terrorists at intelligence and police levels, quite another for a head of government to engage himself in talks without pre-conditions with parties dedicated to the dismemberment of India and, worse, actually allow the question of dismemberment of the country to be part of the agenda."

"I cannot overemphasise," Mr Gandhi adds, "the need to neither give in nor have the people of Punjab believe you have given in, to the threats of terrorists and secessionists. Their writ must not be allowed to run. The pusillanimity with which the Government—and specially the official electronic media—have been succumbing to the terrorists is most distressing, and potentially, suicidal. You will have to carry conviction with the people in Punjab that it is you and not the Panthic committee that is the Government in Punjab."

Cool Reply

Mr Chandra Shekhar, on the other hand, has played cool. He sent a two-para reply to Mr Rajiv Gandhi's three-page letter on the Gulf, thanking the Congress(I) leader for his suggestions and adding: "Please let me know what more can be done."

The political import of the letters, as was natural, led to intense speculation in the camps of various parties, including the Congress(I). However, most of its leaders were blissfully ignorant of how it all happened. Some were not happy, others did not take that dim a view of their supreme leader's action and freely talked of the considerations weighing with him. Mr Gandhi's consultations, it was clear, were confined to the small group of personal aides. The issue, as such, had not figured in the Working Committee or other party fora. Had love letters been the starting point of a break with the Janata Dal(S) Government, party seniors would have been taken into confidence.

Yes, the break—and a fresh Lok Sabha poll does not suit the Congress(I) for various reasons. The party organisation is in no shape to face the electorate—including in the South where it fared impressively in the 1989 election. The confusion in U.P. [Uttar Pradesh] and Gujarat over support to the Janata Dal(S) Governments headed by Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mr Chimanbhai Patel looks like costing the party heavily. That much is conceded by its leaders in the States.

Support to Mulayam Singh Yadav

In Uttar Pradesh, the Congress(I)'s identification with Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, it is feared, could not but have annoyed the majority community at a time when the party is not sure of its traditional vote banks, the minorities and the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled

Tribes. These sections may be attracted to the Janata Dal and its leader, Mr V.P. Singh. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] sweep in the wake of its President, Mr L.K. Advani's rath yatra and the developments in Ayodhya, though beginning to peak off, could not be written off by the Congress(I). Its strategists agree that the party ought to have gone to the poll in November 1989, following the collapse of the V.P. Singh Government, instead of deciding to sustain a miniscule government. In not doing so, the party projected the image of a defeatist, apart from landing itself in the present contradictions and predicaments.

The letters represent a conscious lead to recapture the lost constituency. The indictment of the Government's alleged passivity on the Gulf is, obviously, intended to win over Muslims. This is the meaning of the four-point plan outlined by Mr Gandhi which gives priority to "immediate cessation of all hostilities" and places stress on "a just comprehensive, definite settlement of the question of Palestine."

V.P. Singh's Observation

Mr V.P. Singh was quick to see through the Congress(I) game and promptly called a press conference to point out how the present government had reneged on the Palestine issue. "The National Front Government," he said, "had taken several initiatives to promote the prospect of peaceful settlement, while keeping in step with the UN resolutions on Kuwait. It firmly pleaded for a negotiated solution of all the issues of the region, including Kuwait and Palestine. Saddam Husayn and Palestine are highly emotive issues with a majority of the Muslims in India, as in the rest of the world and hence the sentiments of the type expressed by Mr Gandhi is regarded as making electoral sense."

Similarly the exhortations on Punjab are intended to endear the Congress(I) to the majority community. In the 1985 election, Mr Gandhi made Punjab a major plank of his stability platforms—he used to fling derisive challenges on the Opposition for their support to the Anandpur Sahib resolution. It clicked then.

The two letters—and others that are certain to follow—are thus not a prelude to an imminent break with Mr Chandra Shekhar, but a part of a calculated move to guard against an erosion of the Congress(I) identity (because of its propping up of the Government) and to enhance its electoral appeal.

To say this is not to suggest that there are no pressures within the party against the present arrangement. Some even suggest that the leader take the "straight forward" course of staking his claim to power—in the belief that a section of the Janata Dal(S), at least one-third of its present strength of 54—would be prepared to switch sides and back him. What worries them is Mr Chandra Shekhar's impressive performance against heavy odds.

Chandra Shekhar Press Interviews Reported

TIMES OF INDIA Interview

91AS0671A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 14 Feb 91 pp 1, 13

[Italicized words as published]

[Text] *Three months into office, the present period is arguably the most difficult in the political career of the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar.*

Apart from the problems involved in attempting to motivate a recalcitrant administration, the former Young Turk is having to face consistent sniping, not just from his declared opponents but from his 'allies' as well. The Prime Minister took time off from these cares on Tuesday to talk to M.D. Nalapat:

For the first time in your career, you are responsible for government decisions rather than merely giving advice. How do you react to the change?

There is not much of a problem in taking decisions. The problem is that a point has been reached where issues have got complicated and decisions are not so simple, they are hard. But the only way out (of the present mess) is to take them.

There was an allegation made by Mr V.P. Singh and others that this whole change of government was motivated by opportunism and lust for power.

If those who have indulged in nothing but power politics level such a charge, it does not bother me at all. Only if it had come from people who have never been in power, or who have willingly sacrificed power, could I have taken it seriously.

Well, a specify charge has been made that the previous government fell because it was trying to do something for the backward sections.

(Sarcastically): Everyone knows what they have been doing for the backwards or the downtrodden. The net result of the previous 11-month administration has been deterioration in all walks of life, and in such a situation it is not the rich who suffer, it is the poor. This has been the 'achievement' of Mr V.P. Singh.

What changes have you introduced?

Frankly, any dramatic change is not possible, because the present situation is in the nature of a holding operation. We have to retrieve the situation first before we can bring about any radical changes. What few resources are at our disposal should be employed to meet the basic minimum needs of the people. We should also create an atmosphere of trust among the people by not giving them false promises. Rather, we should honestly say that the country is in difficulty and that everybody will have to suffer and make sacrifices. True, the rich will have to sacrifice more.

There has been a lot of expenditure, a lot of waste, on the part of the government. There is an impression that the government is not going to be asked to tighten its belt, and that the private sector will have to bear the entire burden of finding resources.

This is not true. However, you must realise that there are certain limitations in tightening government expenditure, as most of it is on the establishment. And as long as the present law is there, you cannot reduce the establishment, you cannot retrench people. The other expenditures are nominal and we are trying to reduce them, but the scope is limited.

There is a fear that an approach will be adopted which is against the private sector.

This government is certainly not against the private sector, but at the same time this sector should contribute when times are difficult. We will do nothing against the private sector. On the contrary it will be given all encouragement to produce more. But they should be willing to contribute something to help meet the present difficult situation.

Looking back over the past three months, are you satisfied with the direction taken by the government?

No, I cannot say that I am satisfied, except insofar as it relates to administration. I have never been in government earlier, but my experience is that it is a totally false accusation that the bureaucracy does not co-operate. On the contrary, I feel that the Indian bureaucracy is very responsive, and that civil servants give you the correct advice—whether you agree with it or disagree.

There was a trend in the administration that the political leadership used to indicate its mind to the bureaucrats and then try to get them to tailor their recommendations according to this. I feel that this was a wrong approach in dealing with the civil service, which should be given the freedom to express its point of view. If given that chance, they give good advice and later are ready to implement whatever decision's are taken.

However, I must point out that while the bureaucracy has responded well, the response from the privileged sections of society has not been very positive, in spite of the fact that they know better than most of us that the situation is very difficult. In particular, there has been a trend towards profiteering in this country during the past few months. I have been trying to impress upon traders that they should not seek to trade on the misery of the people, but such advice has thus far fallen on deaf ears. We will not allow such a situation to continue.

There is an allegation that there has been a dilution of our non- alignment policy because of what is called a "pro-U.S" tilt in the Gulf war.

There is no question of a tilt towards the U.S. in the Gulf war. In fact, so far as the basics are concerned, there ought not to be any difference in perception on this issue. After all, I don't think there is anybody who says that Iraq should not vacate Kuwait. The only difference is that ours is a practical approach, while others think that a more visionary attitude would be better.

The world has been changing. The old concept of non-alignment is different now, because there are no power blocs. Non-alignment was with two power blocs, now there are no two power blocks. If we take the substance of non-alignment to mean that we shall be against aggression, against anybody interfering with someone else's sovereignty and integrity, then there is no problem with our policy. In the Gulf war the factual position is that there are U.N. resolutions, there is a sanction, an authorisation, given by the U.N. to send forces there. The government has said that Mr Saddam Hussein should announce that he is ready to vacate Kuwait.

And the Palestinian cause?

We continue to stand for the Palestinian cause and for their liberation, but I have not yet been able to see how annexing Kuwait can liberate Palestine. To liberate one nation, does one make another a slave? And I may point out that the Palestinian government and their leaders are not as exercised over our stand as some others are. The Palestinian special representative met me and I explained our position to him. Now, take refuelling. This has nothing to do with non-alignment, because it is a bilateral decision. And in every situation, on humanitarian grounds such flights have been allowed, not only for the United States but for many other countries in the past and even now. If there is a bilateral arrangement, it should not be a matter of such great controversy.

However, if the whole nation wants that no refuelling be allowed, alright, let us stop. You should understand that we have given this facility because the U.N. resolution was there. All of a sudden war came. We tried our best to see that war did not take place, but it did. Now we have been asking the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] chairman, Yugoslavia, to take an initiative, because according to the non-aligned nations' constitution and traditions, only the president has to take the initiative.

But they have not done that. Now I see that editorials are being written and statements are being made that India has been relegated to the background. Just who has gone to the foreground, I want to know, except of course the belligerents. The USSR has not been able to do anything, China has not been able to do anything. The other Arab countries also have not been able to do anything. Thus, any nation which is pleading for peace in that area has become irrelevant. If two groups are determined to have war, those who talk of peace will become irrelevant. There is, therefore, no need for all this self- condemnation.

You have always been a votary of open government. Now the Tamil Nadu government has been dismissed on grounds of national security. However, no proof has been given that this charge was true.

Evidence will be submitted if the people demand it. If this matter is raised in parliament, I will give all the details to parliament. Earlier when I had said something in parliament a hue and cry was raised, and I gave some of the information to the opposition leaders then. However, they wanted a blanket assurance from me that I would never dismiss the Tamil Nadu government and I was not ready to give this, because I was not happy with the way the government was functioning there.

In the case of Tamil Nadu all kinds of theories are being aired—that the governor's report was not there and, therefore, that the dismissal was unconstitutional. Such a view is a total distortion of the constitution, because there is a provision in it of action "either on the governor's report or otherwise." If some facts are known to the government of India and is not known to the governor, I cannot ask the governor to give a report on the basis of my information. I told Mr Barnala that it is our information, I shall not ask you to give it. So if it is an open government, I should depend on my own sources of information and not get it only through Mr Barnala. If I am convinced that an action is necessary, why should I pass that responsibility on to the governor?

And you were convinced that the situation in Tamil Nadu was such that the Union government had to act?

Anybody who has anything to do with the security and the dignity of the nation would have been convinced after seeing the report that I got.

There has been talk of having discussions with militant groups in the Punjab, but why is the role of Pakistan not stressed?

I think that such a focus will not help in solving the Punjab problem. Shifting responsibility to others is not a correct way of dealing with the situation. If Pakistan is playing mischief and some of our people are getting impressed or inspired by Pakistan, there is something wrong in the way we approach our own people. If our citizens who have fought for the freedom of this country are inspired by a foreign power, we should therefore search our own hearts instead.

What is our view on the growing communalism in India?

It is a serious problem. On the issue at least we should try to coordinate the efforts of all political elements who stand by secularism, because the issue is not one of being against one community in favour of the other, the issue is the very survival of India as a secular state. And we should fight to retain this character.

Do you feel the present (political) consensus will continue?

(Pauses) I hope it does, because we need this consensus to solve the problems of the people.

PTI Interview

91AS0671B Madras THE HINDU in English 9 Feb 91 p 6

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 8 February: The Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar today said that any political arrangement, including a coalition or an understanding, was desirable to "retrieve" the very difficult national situation.

"Anything that can retrieve the situation is desirable—weather coalition, understanding, working together" he said, stressing the need for a national consensus to solve the country's problems.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said there was no strain in his party's relationship with the Congress(I). The arrangement between them was "quite satisfactory" though he could not say "everything is very well."

In an exclusive interview with PTI, the Prime Minister answered questions on a wide range of subjects, including speculation regarding a realignment of political forces, economic situation, Punjab, Kashmir, the controversy over refuelling facilities granted to U.S. aircraft and the Gulf war.

Answering a question about reports that the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Devi Lal had been in contact with Left parties and the Congress(I), Mr Chandra Shekhar said "I have no knowledge about any talk of Chaudhary Devi lalji with the Left parties. Neither he has told me nor the left parties have given any indication to me."

"I am not interested in private conversations and this is not the proper way of dealing with the political problems that we should go on eaves-dropping," he said.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said no suggestion had been made to him about possible realignment of political forces nor had there been any discussions between his Government and the Congress(I) on coming together in a coalition.

On the controversy over refuelling facilities, granted to U.S. aircraft, Mr Chandra Shekhar said India had made it quite clear to Americans that lethal weapons or anything adding to war effort will not be allowed.

The decision had been taken on humanitarian grounds but he would not like to divide the public opinion in the country on this issue, the Prime Minister said.

Punjab problem: The Prime Minister said the Government was prepared to consider any "specific proposal" for safe conduct of militants who wished to have talks on the Punjab issue. However, he warned that his offer of talks should not be misconstrued and those indulging in killing of innocents would be dealt with as "the law requires" and nobody would be allowed to go "scot free."

The Prime Minister said any further talks on Punjab would depend on a response from Mr Simranjit Singh Mann, Akali Dal leader. Mr Mann had wanted that militants should be associated with the Punjab negotiations.

On Kashmir, the Prime Minister said some of the militants in the State were "coming to the mainstream. But it is a trickle."

Mr Chandra Shekhar said militants who have surrendered have realised the "futility" of the exercise of indulging in violence and talking of independence. They have come to understand that these exercises are going to fail.

Asked about his plans to visit the border State, Mr Chandra Shekhar said he would let the nation know.

Economic situation: The Prime Minister said people in higher brackets of income will have to contribute more to the national exchequer, but there was a limit beyond which one cannot go. "If I am asking everybody to make sacrifice, so people who have got more should make more sacrifices," he said.

Mr Chandra Shekhar, who refused to be drawn into a discussion on what would be there in the Union Budget, said, "There are certain limits also beyond which one cannot go, because we cannot create a situation where initiative to produce more is hampered...so we will have to balance everything.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said a decision to go in for a larger IMF loan would "depend on the economic situation" in the country. The Prime Minister said he would be guided by the people's reaction on this.

India has already received an IMF loan of Rs [rupees] 3,275 crores to tide over the difficult balance of payments position. Asked if the Government will go in for one more IMF loan, the Prime Minister said, "I cannot say. Let us see, how the people react. If the people do not want an IMF loan, they will have to make sacrifices."

Subsidies: Asked to spell out his views on the crucial question of subsidies and the suggestion that they should be done away with in the General Budget, the Prime Minister said, in certain cases it was necessary while in others it was not necessary. To a question in which of the areas it should be retained, the Prime Minister said it needed a detailed exercise.

'Nothing wrong:' The Prime Minister saw nothing wrong in his attending a dinner hosted for controversial international arms dealer Mr Adan Khashoggi.

There were about 100 people at the dinner hosted by Dr J.K. Jain, BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] MP [Member of Parliament], whom he had known for a long time, Mr Chandra Shekhar said. "Dr Jain invited me. Should I see his guest list," he said, adding he had no hesitation in meeting any (type of) people.

Joint Meetings To Discuss Ayodhya Called Off

91AS0670A Madras THE HINDU in English 7 Feb 91 p 9

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 6 February: There is to be no joint meeting of the experts committee on the Ayodhya controversy and instead it was decided today that the experts of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [VHP] and those of the All India Babri Masjid Action Committee [AIBMAC] would meet separately and submit their individual reports to the Government "as soon as possible."

While both the VHP and the AIBMAC agreed to continue extending cooperation to the Government and meet the Government if asked to do so, it seems there will be no more joint meetings with the two parties—at least no date has been fixed—and the VHP announced that there would be no more meetings with the AIBMAC unless specific "permission" was given by a Sant Sammelan.

The talks on the Ayodhya controversy here today between the VHP and the AIBMAC at Rajasthan House were held in the presence of Mr Subodh Kant Sahay, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, and two Chief Ministers—Mr Bhairon Singh Shekhawat of Rajasthan and Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav of Uttar Pradesh. Mr Sharad Pawar, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, the third "regular" participant, could not attend as he was busy with the first meeting of his expanded Cabinet. It was the fourth round of talks in the dialogue that began on 1 December last year.

Verification of authenticity: Several decisions were taken today. Mr Sahay told newspersons that both sides had agreed that the Government should immediately compare the documents deposited with it by the two parties with the originals and verify their authenticity. Each of the two parties also agreed to submit to the government a descriptive and analytical summary of the documents presented by it including an analysis of the 'other point of view.'

The VHP and the AIBMAC agreed to co-operate with the Government if it seeks any clarification from them or wishes to hold any discussion with them separately. While the Government has not stipulated any date by which the two parties will submit their summaries, it hoped that this would be submitted "as soon as possible."

Later, the VHP joint secretary, Mr Giriraj Kishore said the VHP would submit its summary report within eight to ten days, but the AIBMAC cautioned that it could take longer for it to complete the work for the Government was yet to complete the work of verification of the documents and make available to the experts some of the complete and original papers which they would need to consult Mr Zafaryab Jilani, convenor of the AIBMAC,

pointed out to newspersons that the Government itself in its note on the meeting of 10 January had said that it could take at least six weeks to verify the documents submitted by the two sides. [sentence as published]

An undercurrent of tension: It is learnt that when the issues that led to the deadlock in the expert committee meeting on 24 January were being discussed at the meeting today and when it seemed that the two sides would not agree, it was Mr Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and Mr Sahay who suggested that the experts meet separately and that each side give a separate expert committee report to the Government. Thus a way out was found. Mr Sahay and both the sides described the meeting as "very cordial" but there seemed to be an undercurrent of tension with the fear that the talks had come to an end. The VHP made it clear that it would be launching an aggressive campaign of the Ram Janmabhoomi issue as already announced by it at Prayag, Allahabad, recently.

The AIBMAC which objected to this was assured that the campaign would be kept peaceful. However, there was the fear that the VHP may once again arouse communal passions to a point where they would burst into violence.

VHP calendar of 'events:' Mr Giriraj Kishore later enumerated the various events in the VHP calendar over the next two months: block level meetings and demonstrations to propagate the VHP view on the temple demand throughout February; from 11 to 15 March large demonstrations, one in each district of every State with the same date set for every district of a particular State, hoisting of saffron flags atop houses throughout the country on 17 March; reading of Ramcharitmanas continuously for nine days up to 24 March, the day of Rama Navami, celebrated as the birth anniversary of Ram; 23 March to be celebrated as Durga Asthami with an emphasis on the women's wing of the VHP; and more significantly, 29-30 March to be celebrated as Hanuman Jayanti when the Bajrang Dal would make public the lists of "Hindu religious places destroyed by non-Hindus" and also publish the lists of 'mazaars' and mosques which have come up 'illegally' after 1947.

This would be followed by a large demonstration before Parliament on 4 April and a review of its programme at a meeting of 'dharmacharyas' here on 6 and 7 April. When asked what would happen to the Ram temple building programme in the meanwhile, Mr Giriraj Kishore said "We have our programme, we are in no hurry." He specifically stated that there would be no question of any more direct talks with the AIBMAC unless permission is given by the 'sants' and that would not be possible at all till the 6-7 April meeting in New Delhi.

Fears over VHP campaign: The Jilani told newspersons that the VHP which had been objecting to documents questioning evidence relating to the Babri Masjid as "the birthplace" of Ram would now be forced to take these into account also. The decision today had not thrown out any set of documents presented by the AIBMAC as demanded by the VHP experts on 24 January. "While we accept that it is a question of Hindu faith and belief that Ram was one of the 'avtars,' when they lay claim to the Babri Masjid as his birthplace, surely they have to prove this. "There were also apprehensions in the AIBMAC camp that the February-March campaign of the VHP would once again worsen the communal situation in the country.

CCP Delegates Visit Bengal CPI Council

91AS0674A Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 5 Feb 91 p 7

[Text] For the first time after over quarter of a century, a Chinese Communist Party [CCP] delegation visited the office of the West Bengal State Council of the CPI [Communist Party of India] in Calcutta on Monday. A six-member CPC delegation headed by Mr Jaiang Guanghua, deputy head of the International Liaison Department of the Central Committee of the CPC, spent over an hour at the State CPI office on Bowbazar Street exchanging views with the State leadership of the CPI. The CPC delegation is currently on a visit to India at the invitation of the CPI.

The 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict which led to the split of the undivided CPI on the issue of branding China as the aggressor brought about a complete break in the fraternal relations between the CPI and CPC. For over two decades between 1964, when the CPI split, and 1985, when the two parties initiated moves to re-establish ties, the two parties not only had no contact but the CPC had even accused the CPI of being revisionist and a running dog of the Soviet party.

In fact, the CPC had approved the split in the CPI and openly welcomed the formation of the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and its stand on the Sino-Indian border dispute. The CPC's open and wholehearted support for the CPI(M) lasted until 1969 when it again welcomed the split in the CPI(M) and formation of the CPI(ML) [Communist Party of India—Marxist-Leninist].

However, subsequent changes in the CPC leadership in the late seventies and early eighties made the party recant "for having pursued a wrong line" with regard to the Communist movement in India.

As part of its effort to repair the damage with the Indian Communists, a CPC delegation which came to attend the centenary celebrations of the AICC(I) [All-India Congress Committee] in Bombay in 1985, made moves to re-establish contact with the CPI. Subsequently, two high-powered CPI delegations, one led by Mr C. Rajeswar Rao, the then General Secretary of the CPI, and the other by Mr Rajsekhar Reddy, member, Central Executive Council of the CPI, visited China in 1987 and

1989, respectively, for resuming ties. The CPC had also sent delegates to the CPI's 14th party congress held in Calcutta in 1989.

Welcoming the CPC delegation to the West Bengal State Council office, Mr Swadhin Guha, member of the State secretariat of the CPI, said he was happy that a delegation from China was here "to make the unpleasant phase of misunderstanding between the two parties is a thing of the past.

Mr Guha pointed out that the CPI sincerely believed in Communist unity and had in fact given a call for Communist unity in India at its Calcutta party congress.

The CPI, he said, has also hailed the CPC's decision to join the mainstream of the international Communist movement in the early eighties. Although the CPI has neither approved nor criticized the brutal action at Tiananmen Square, Mr Guha in his brief speech said: "Your action there was not liked by many of your sympathizers in India.

Mr Jaiang, in his reply, avoided any mention of the Tiananmen episode and dwelt at length on the economic and other reforms effected by the CPC.

The delegation also called on the Chief Minister at Writers' Buildings. Mr Jyoti Basu welcomed the resumption of border trade between India and China. Miss Kang Xiuying, who is a member of the CPC delegation, was born in Kalimpong and reportedly migrated to China with her relations almost four decades ago.

The CPI leaders later hosted a dinner in honour of the CPC team where they inquired why Bombay instead of Calcutta was chosen for opening of a Chinese Consulate in India. The CPI leaders said it would have been in the fitness of things if the Chinese Consulate was reopened in Calcutta as one had functioned in this city until the Sino-Indian border war in 1962.

Ruling Janata Dal Holds First Convention

Devi Lal Speaks

91AS0675A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 1 Feb 91 p 4

[Article by Sankarshan Thakur]

[Text] Deosthali (Ballia), 31 January: While showering praise on the Congress(I) for "lending support and shouldering a great national responsibility at a time of crisis," the Janata Dal(S) president, Mr Devi Lal, today set at rest all speculation about his party's merger with the Congress(I) by stating that it had "created a new sense of hope and has a bright future."

Addressing the first national convention of the ruling party, Mr Devi Lal said, "Though we are only two months old, we have a great future. We have reversed the trend of chaos and our performance in government provides cause for satisfaction."

At the same time, Mr Devi Lal sounded a warning against the growth of communal separatist forces and called for a "new national movement to create the India of the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi." Mr Devi Lal's speech was repeatedly applauded by the strong Haryana Green Brigade contingent.

Devoid of any fresh policy of programme direction that the delegates here might have been looking for, the Deputy Prime Minister dwelled at length on justifying the split in the party and seeking Congress(I) support. It was nothing but a response to a political emergency and it was our national duty at a time when the nation was writhing under the severe pain of socio-political wounds," he said.

Attacking Mr V.P. Singh, Mr Devi Lal said, "Even after the BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party] withdrawal of support, I tried to maintain unity. But my appeal for reason went futile as the people who have called us defectors were themselves unwilling to sacrifice the chair" Mr Devi Lal accused the V.P. Singh government of "terrorising the psyche of our countrymen by unleashing caste and communal forces "he was equally critical of the BJP which is threatening the secular-democratic polity and unleashing communal forces with a view to capture power."

Mr Devi Lal called the Ayodhya dispute a "blot on our society" and appealed to "all secular and nationalist sections to ensure that this unsavoury controversy does not eat into the vitals of our political system any further." While he expressed happiness that the religious leadership on both sides had "agreed to find a solution through negotiations."

Mr Devi Lal expressed equal concern about the situation in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir and admitted that the problems were "eluding an answer." He held the neglect of political and democratic institutions chiefly responsible and, in a specific reference to Punjab, said, "Our duty shall be to restore the credibility of political institutions and to restore political leadership." This, party sources said, might not, however, be an indication of elections in Punjab, for a political breakthrough is yet to come. Not unusually, Mr Devi Lal also made a strong plea for attention to rural areas and said, "Our development motto should be: Back to the villages. The Green Revolution has only resulted in certain islands of prosperity amidst the ocean of poverty and despondency."

1 February Session

91AS0675B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 2 Feb 91 pp 1, 7

[Article by Ambikanand Sahay; boldface words as published]

[Text] Deosthali (Ballia), 1 February: The first national convention of the ruling party today passed a resolution changing the name of the organization from Janata Dal (S) to Samajwadi Janata Party to establish a separate

identity which would in no way resemble Mr V.P. Singh's Janata Dal. While the colour of the party flag is likely to be retained, the organization would, in all probability, adopt the symbol of Mr Subramanian Swamy's Janata Party.

Because of strictly legal problems, the final merger of the Janata Party with the ruling party could not be announced. Mr Subramanian Swamy said the problems were being sorted out and the two parties would formally merge soon.

Moving his amendment to the political resolution, the U.P. [Uttar Pradesh] Chief Minister, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, emphasized the need for "having a separate identity of our own which does not, even remotely, have anything in common with the Janata Dal." He described Mr V.P. Singh as a fake messiah of the backward classes. His suggestion that the party's name be changed was accepted unanimously.

The U.P. Chief Minister also wanted the party to take a clear stand in favour of the Mandal Commission recommendations. He reminded the audience that it was Mr Chandra Shekhar who as chief of the Janata Dal's Manifesto Committee, had included the promise to implement the Mandal recommendations in the party manifesto in 1989. "The Mandal recommendations should be implemented in letter and spirit, but the poor among the upper castes should also be given reservation benefits," he said and condemned the manner in which Mr V.P. Singh had announced the Centre's decision to implement the Mandal recommendations. Mr Yadav was cheered. Encouraged by the support from the crowd, the Chief Minister asked Mr Devi Lal who was sitting on the dais along with the Prime Minister and other party leaders, to desist from the politics of "making and breaking alliances." The end result of such politics had been that rootless wonders became Prime Ministers, he told the Deputy Prime Minister. Mr Yadav was referring to Mr V.P. Singh's elevation as Prime Minister in 1989 because of the machinations of Mr Devi Lal.

The U.P. Chief Minister's speech was cheered by the crowd. And when Mr Chandra Shekhar voiced his support for the cause of other backward classes and the poor among the upper castes, the crowd erupted into applause once again.

In his speech, the Prime Minister gave the impression that he was not a prophet of doom like many others. Despite the grave socio-political and economic crisis that the nation was facing India would not only survive but also cruise along the path of progress and prosperity, he said.

The Prime Minister called upon the people to donate generously for the national reconstruction fund. He referred to the financial crisis but said that there was no cause for alarm. If all countrymen, both rich and poor, donated for the national reconstruction fund in accordance with their means there was no reason why development works would suffer.

UNI adds: Mr Chandra Shekhar today said India, in cooperation with friendly countries, was taking a new initiative to end hostilities in the Gulf.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said India had tried to prevent the Gulf war but unfortunately all attempts by it and its friendly countries failed. We could not, of course, prevent it. But we know we cannot sit back and watch helplessly, he said.

The Prime Minister spoke to the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharief, on Wednesday and followed it up with a meeting with the Pakistan Ambassador here yesterday.

Representatives of the Palestinian Liberation Organization are likely to meet him here today.

Beside, the First Secretary in the British High Commission at Delhi also arrived here yesterday, presumably in the same context.

The Prime Minister said the Gulf war would affect the national economy as the country had a big stake in the Arab world.

More on Shekhar

91AS0675C Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 2 Feb 91 p 7

[Text] Deosthali (Ballia), 1 February: The Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, asserted today that even though his was a minority government it would not be deferred from taking tough decisions.

Addressing the first national convention of the Janata Dal(S) here, Mr Chandra Shekhar said, "Many people call us a minority government and a weak government but I want to tell them that a government is a government and it will take decisions without coming under pressure from anyone."

In a short and forthright, though rather lacklustre, speech, Mr Chandra Shekhar also hinted at stemming the attack on the former Prime Minister, Mr V.P. Singh, which has become the hallmark of the convention. He said, "Let us forget the past and attacking ghosts of the past who have nothing to do but whine and complain. Let us move forward towards building a new future." The Prime Minister added that instead of attacking the past regime a "better idea would be to learn from its mistakes and face the future challenges."

Speaking after the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr Mulyam Singh Yadav, who had made a strong plea for adhering to the Mandal Commission's recommendations, the Prime Minister said, "There shall be no compromise on issues like Mandal Commission to which we are committed. We have to recognise that till social inequalities exist, these reservations will have to continue."

Mr Chandra Shekhar, however, added the crucial rider that sections of the upper castes that are economically

weak will also have to be given the benefits of reservation in government jobs and schools and colleges.

Mr Chandra Shekhar also hit out, though indirectly, against the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] and said, "Lord Ram is not buried in a square foot of the ground somewhere but lives in the hearts of the poor. In any case, neither Ram nor Rahim ever preached mutual killings." The minorities were living under threat, Mr Chandra Shekhar said.

"We shall have to face those trying to destroy communal amity but that should not be done with anger but with patience and sobriety. The solution to every problem can be had through talks and negotiations."

Resolution Discussed

91AS0675A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 2 Feb 91 p 7

[Text] Deosthali (Ballia), 1 February: The Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, today moved a significant amendment to the party's political resolution stating that the party stood firmly committed to implementing the recommendations of the Mandal Commission in full.

While the original resolution had skirted the issue by stating that the party would take "all constitutional steps" for the upliftment of backward communities, Mr Mulayam Singh rose midway through this morning's proceedings to state that "there should be no confusion on these issues, let us be clear that we stand for implementing the Mandal Commission report." The chief minister added, though, that reservations should also be extended to economically weaker people belonging to the upper castes and to women and youth.

Mr Yadav, making the most significant speech of the entire session, moved another amendment thanking the Congress(I), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and other smaller groups for extending support to the Janata Dal (S) government. "We are not ungrateful people and we must express our gratitude in this fashion," Mr Yadav said. Both amendments were later accepted by the convention and are being incorporated in the final resolution.

While Mr Yadav thanked the Congress(I) he also made it clear, in no uncertain terms, that the Janata Dal (S) would not merge with any other group. "Let us say today that we shall work for strengthening the organisation and that we shall fight alone. We will not take part in the politics of mergers and we shall think about lending and receiving support when the opportunity comes," Mr Yadav said amid loud cheers from a section of the gathering.

He then turned to the Deputy Prime Minister and party president, Mr Devi Lal, and said, "I request you not to play the politics of numbers and wheeling-dealing at least for some time. Let us put out heads together and strengthen the party. We shall succeed. Mr Devi Lal nodded in response.

Mr Yadav's amendment on the Mandal Commission actually voices the concern in a section of the party whose political future depends on the social forces benefited by the Mandal report. While on the one hand there is a feeling that Mr V.P. Singh's campaign will hijack their constituency, there have also, of late, been misgivings in the rank and file about the intentions of the Chandra Shekhar government.

Clarifying the issue, Mr Yadav said, "There has never been any doubt that Mr Chandra Shekhar and the party are fully committed to the Mandal Commission but it needed to be amplified so that no doubts exist and that is what I am doing through this amendment.

"Reliable Dal (S) sources told THE TELEGRAPH that Mr Yadav had expressed dissatisfaction with the political resolution last night at a meeting with the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and other senior leaders. It was then decided that he would move this morning's resolutions.

Although Mr Yadav's amendment has been adopted, the party also needs to moderate its stand, essentially because of its political compulsions. That is why even Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav did not forget to add that economically weaker sections of the upper caster castes will also have to be given reservations.

The difficulties of the Janata Dal (S) with taking too open and strong a line on the issue were explained by none other than the Union railway minister, Mr Janeshwar Mishra, who had moved the political resolution yesterday. "While taking a decision we must remember that we are on crutches and the crutches can go any time."

No Defined Policy

91AS0675E Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 4 Feb 91 p 7

[Italicized words as published]

[Text] Devasthali (Ballia), 3 February: Notwithstanding the claims of senior Janata Dal (S) leaders that the party has a great future, it is evident that their enthusiasm is not shared by a considerable section of the rank and file who feel that the Congress may withdraw its support to the Chandra Shekhar government jeopardising the existence of the fledgling party.

Devoid of a party organisation throughout the country, the first national convention here failed to announce any concrete policies or programmes for the party workers to take up in their areas. At best, they were treated to vague generalities about the great task ahead of the party in maintaining the unity and integrity of the country.

According to the party general secretary, nearly 9,000 delegates from various states attended the convention though 15,000 had been invited. However, most of those who attended were from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh [UP] and Haryana, with little representation from the south.

"We came just because we were told to come. But there is hardly any party organisation in my state, no particular policies to pursue and no effective argument to counter the general feeling that the Janata Dal (S) would be a short-lived experiment," a young party worker from West Bengal, Mr Pramod Maitra, said. According to him, there was considerable confusion within the rank and file of the party.

Mr Jagdamba Prasad, president of the party's Madhya Pradesh unit, was the most critical about the lack of attention being paid to organisational matters. During his speech on the political resolution on the second day of the session on Friday, he said: "all these resolutions we are adopting are meaningless unless the party organisation is built up. There is no organisation in Madhya Pradesh, no top leader bothers to visit us, neither do we have an office," he said to an appreciative audience.

Whatever token representation there was from the south and from states where party leaders have little following, was mainly due to the delegates' personal equation with Mr Chandra Shekhar. Many of them were associated with his padyatra undertaken in the 80s through various states.

"We are aware of the uncertainty over the future of the government also about the talk about a possible merger with the Congress. But whatever happens to the party, we are more loyal to Mr Chandra Shekhar. If he joins the congress, we will also follow him. But that appears unlikely," said Mr Kamal Maheshwari, a delegate from Delhi. Delegates from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh also pledged their loyalty to Mr Chandra Shekhar than to the other party leaders.

The lack of party organisation was also evident by the fact that invitation letters for the convention reached persons in various districts who were not expecting them while those who were expecting the invitation never got them.

A party leader from Gujarat admitted that public opinion was not in favour of the party and that local partymen were facing problems in their areas because "we are often called a party of defectors." "Maybe, this is just another political "dukan" (shop), but who knows, as Mr Devi Lal said, the party might really have a great future."

There is also resentment over the fact that constitution of state units was not finalised during the session though many of the delegates had been expecting it. As it is, besides states where there are Janata Dal (S) chief ministers, the party cannot boast of even a semblance of an organisation.

The attendance on the first day of the session was poor but the audience was bolstered on the second and third day by the large number of people who came from adjoining areas of the state and nearby areas of Bihar. Most, however, came to listen to *adhyakshji* or *netaji*, as Mr Chandra Shekhar is called, but were disappointed that the U.P. chief minister, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, did not announce any developmental schemes for Ballia district.

New Secretaries for Congress-I Committee

91AS0662A Madras THE HINDU in English 16 Feb 91 p 9

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] New Delhi, 15 February: The Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, today appointed four new general secretaries to fill the vacancies in the All India Congress(I) Committee [AICC(I)]. The posts have been vacant for quite some time now.

A significant change was the swapping of places by Mrs Rajendra Kumari Bajpai, the Uttar Pradesh Congress(I) Committee [UPCC(I)] president, with Mr Mahabir Prasad, one of the AICC(I) general secretaries.

The other three new general secretaries are Mr Janardhan Poojary, a former Union Minister and former Karnataka PCC(I) [Pradesh Congress Committee] president, Mr Gulam Nabi Azad, a former AICC(I) general secretary and Ms Meera Kumar, daughter of late Jagjivan Ram.

Mr Jitendra Prasad, who was a general secretary for five months in 1985-86, has been appointed to the newly created post of Political Secretary to the party president.

Support for Mulayam may continue: Announcing the changes, the Congress(I) spokesman, Mr V.N. Gadgil, said the existing two general secretaries, Mr H.K.L. Bhagat and Mr Balram Jhakar, will continue to be there. However, there might be a shuffle of their portfolios later. The change of guard in Uttar Pradesh seem to indicate that the party does not want to disturb Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav in the immediate future. Mrs Rajendra Kumari Bajpai had been pressuring the Congress(I) High Command to withdraw support to the Mulayam Ministry on the ground that continuation of support could jeopardise the electoral chances of the party in the coming elections.

Relations on this issue between the party High Command and Uttar Pradesh unit reached a flash point last month when the PCC(I) adopted a resolution favouring withdrawal of support to the Mulayam Ministry. The High Command not only vetoed the decision of the State unit but made a decision to change the local leadership in view of its continuing conflict with the Mulayam Government.

Accommodation of Mrs Rajendra Kumari Bajpai is perhaps meant to assuage the sentiments of Uttar Pradesh legislators and workers who had supported her in the move for replacement of Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav. The Congress(I) leaders said the new UPCC(I) chief, Mr Mahabir Prasad, has the unenviable task of carrying the party rank and file with him, particularly those opposed to the present dispensation.

New post: Interestingly the new Political Secretary of the party president had mobilised support from all the U.P. Congress(I) candidates in the last Lok Sabha election in favour of the High Command decision to support the Mulayam Ministry. He had convened a meeting of all the present and ex-MPs [Members of Parliament] from the State here in the third week of December and got a resolution adopted endorsing the High Command decision. The initiative was taken at a juncture when pressure from the State unit was mounting on the High Command for review of its decision to support Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Eyebrows have been raised in the Congress(I) circles at the appointment of Mr Jitendra Prasad to the post of Political Secretary, an impressive title by any reckoning. Mr Prasad has been representing the Shahjahanpur Parliamentary constituency since 1971. Barring 1977 and 1989, when he lost the election, Mr Prasad has been a Member of Lok Sabha for three terms.

Eighth Five-Year Plan Ready by 31 March

91AS0628A Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Hyderabad, 3 Feb—The Eighth Five Year Plan document including allocations will be ready by 31 March, this year, said the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Mr Mohan Dharia here on Sunday.

Mr Dharia told reporters that after the document was approved by the National Development Council, he and the members of the Commission would visit the States once in three months and review the implementation of the Plan programmes. While he visits all the States, each member of the Planning Commission would be allotted four or five States for monitoring the implementation of these programmes. This, he said, was the first time that there would be such a review after the allocations were made.

The National Informatic Centre (NIC), which is under the Ministry of Planning, is having about 450 centres in all district headquarters in the country.

The Deputy Chairman said these NIC centres would be utilised in monitoring and evaluating the Plan programmes and make all the data available to the Commission and also to the State Governments. These centres would give the data to educational institutions and other organisations and individuals, whoever want it.

Mr Dharia said the exercise on 1991-92 Plan outlay in respect of all States and the Central Ministries was over.

'National Programmes'

Certain programmes such as family planning, drinking water, literacy, abolition of scavenging system, construction of latrines and afforestation should be lifted over the party considerations, otherwise these programmes would never be implemented. Whatever be the party in power, the Government should treat these as national programmes and implement them. After 43 years since Independence, they all should come together and implement all the national programmes and create a new approach.

He said that he had already held discussions with the leaders of all parties in Delhi on this matter and there was a good response from them to his suggestion. Mr Dharia said that he had also met the National Front Chairman Mr N.T. Rama Rao here on Saturday on this matter.

Mr Dharia said the Central Government gives 75 percent as subsidy to the States with regard to the setting up of gobar gas plants and wanted that all the State Governments should take advantage of this facility.

He said that about 160 million hectares in the Country was a waste land and about 125 million hectares was cultivable barren. With less investment, it could be brought under use. Maharashtra was one of the major States, having more than 10 million hectares of barren land. This was indeed a great challenge. An action plan was prepared to bring these vast barren lands under cultivation.

Panel Reports on Oil Needs, Exploitation

91AS0668A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 7 Feb 91 p 8

[Article by K.K. Sharma]

[Text] New Delhi, 6 February: Over one million tonnes less crude a year from the rich Bombay High offshore field is expected to be pumped out by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission [ONGC] following the discovery that the area has been over-exploited.

An expert committee asked to go into the matter has recommended a "drastic reduction" in the oil wells now being used because their overuse threatens their future as well as that of the Bombay High field.

The matter was being discussed with the ministry of petroleum in an effort to reduce the oil production as far as possible. If recommendations of the expert committee are accepted, the loss could be three million tonnes a year. ONGC hopes, however, to limit the loss to just over one million tonnes.

This intensified India's critical situation arising out of the Gulf war. Just over 40 percent of its supplies of crude

and petroleum products are imported, mainly from the Gulf. Should the war be prolonged, shortages will develop and, inevitably, affect industrial production, transport and household needs.

The situation is grim enough to force the government to send missions to countries like Venezuela and Malaysia to look for alternative sources of supply. This followed the realisation that any major cuts in oil supply and consumption, attempted first when the Gulf crisis started five months ago, would impair growth of the economy.

India's predicament is the result of demand for petroleum products having risen far faster than its ability to produce crude domestically. Domestic production met more than 75 percent of annual needs 10 years ago, but with the stagnation in output this has slipped to 60 percent.

India has failed to learn from previous oil shocks. Oil industry experts give two reasons for the failure to increase domestic production rapidly to achieve self-sufficiency, a goal that would have greatly alleviated the current balance of payments crisis had it been reached.

These are, first, the failure to conserve oil by changing over to alternative sources of energy, including the country's abundant coal resources and non-conventional sources like the sun and wind.

A special department created for this more than a decade ago has done little more than start pilot projects and so reliance on traditional sources of energy remains preponderent. There is virtually no use of the country's abundant natural gas resources, forcing oil companies to flare it wastefully.

Second, India's oil exploration and production agencies, the government- owned Oil and Natural Gas Commission and Oil India, have not been able to locate oil in commercial quantities to enable them to exploit vast established geological reserves.

Developments in Aircraft, Tie-Up With Soviets

91AS0634A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Jan 91 p 3

[Article by Srinivas Laxman]

[Text] Bombay, 24 Jan—India and the Soviet Union may collaborate in the codevelopment of a 120-seater TU-334 passenger aircraft.

Recently, the scientific adviser to the defence minister, Dr V.S. Arunachalam, constituted a group comprising representatives of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), the National Aeronautical Laboratory (NAL) and the Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) to study the codevelopment of this aircraft.

Speaking to THE TIMES OF INDIA, Mr K. Srinivasa, director of aeronautics, government of India, said at present the TU-334 was designed with a propellor.

Mr Srinivasa said manufacturers would however, like to change to the new "Pro-fan" which would ensure a 15 to 30 percent fuel saving. It was in this area mainly that both India and the USSR were now exploring the possibility of collaboration—the development of the "prop-fan" for the TU-334.

"HAL has shown a lot of interest in this project," he told this reporter.

Inquiries made by the paper show that "prop-fan" technology had already been tried out by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in some of the civil aircraft in the United States.

However, aircraft manufacturers are reported to have expressed some reservations. The Indo-Soviet project is expected to be an improvement on the one developed by NASA.

The prop-fan is placed at the rear of the aircraft near the vertical stabiliser with the propellor facing rearwards. Though it ensures a 15 to 30 percent fuel saving, aeronautical scientists abroad spoke of the excessive noise it generated and the vibrations it created on the body of the aircraft. It is in these areas where improvements needed to be effected, it was stated.

Touching on some of the other projects, Mr Srinivasa said that India and the Soviet Union were also exploring the possibility in the co-production of the 160-seater TU-204 aircraft and the IL-96.

Explaining the difference between "co-production" and "co-development" he said in the former, the country would buy the aircraft and then make certain parts of it and give it to manufacturers.

In "co-development" on the other hand scientists and engineers would share their knowledge on a particular project which in this case would be the development of the "prop-fan" technology for the TU-334 aircraft.

Mr Srinivasa hoped that airlines in India would show interest in the TU-334.

Touching on some of the other projects, he said that the first phase of the Full Scale Engineering Development (FSED) costing Rs [rupees] 1,500 crore of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) had been cleared and two technology demonstrators would be built.

Regarding the Pilotless Target Aircraft (PTA) being developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency, he said, that user evaluation would begin soon.

Army Pilots Trained at Deolali Artillery School

91AS0633A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 31 Jan 91 p 6

[Text] Deolali (Maharashtra), 30 Jan (UNI)—Army aviation, the youngest unit of the Indian army, has spread its wings and is reaching out to newer horizons, apart from playing its classic role as the third eye of the ground forces.

Army aviation, which came into being in November 1986, had taken over ground control operations and maintenance of its helicopter squadrons from the air force, and are operating as part of army divisions spread all over the country. These aircraft are flown by army airmen, who are gunner officers of the artillery, since its inception as air observation posts in 1947.

Air operation is one of the three roles envisaged for army aviation, the other two being utility services and attack helicopters.

According to Maj-Gen Romesh Khosla, commandant of the school of artillery in Deolali, where operational skills are imparted to the gunner-pilots of army aviation, the army needs "more intimate air support and more quantum of support, while the air force was going high, going deep and getting faster."

As these were two conflicting developments, the role of army aviation becomes more pronounced. Experts say that army aviators can adapt better to the challenges of mechanised and trench warfare which has come to stay.

It is at the school of artillery, the home of all gunners, that special tactics, gunnery and specialised exercises are taught to budding aviators. The air observation post conversion course is conducted by the training squadron of the army aviation stationed at Deolali.

The school of artillery was shifted to picturesque Deolali, surrounded by the majestic splendour of the Sahyadiri ranges, in 1941. Every gunner learns his fundamentals from the school and returns frequently for further training.

The school trains 957 officers every year. The most prestigious course, the final one for the gunner, is the long gunnery staff course (LGSC), says Brig D.K. Khullar, brigadier-general, staff, school of artillery.

It also trains 734 junior commissioned officers (JCOs) and non-commissioned officers, and has in its rolls officers from other countries, mostly from South Asia.

The aim of the LGSC is to train instructors in gunnery. There are 150 instructors and 100 assistant instructors in the school.

At the tactical wing of the school, officers undergo brain-storming sessions on tactical exercises without troops.

At the field wing, the officers are introduced to the capabilities of the guns, mortars and Howitzers used by the artillery. Says Brig Opinder Kumar: "It's here the gunner picks up the intricate skills in gunnery which then become his second nature." Training is also given to JCOs who man the command posts, the temporary headquarters in the combat zone, situated close to the gun positions.

The command posts receive information from the air observation posts about enemy targets, and are passed on to the gun position officers to direct artillery fire.

The surveillance and target acquisition wing of the school has an array of high-tech radars, claimed to be among the best in the world, the Stentor, and the Cymbeline being the latest inductions. The Stentor traces moving targets of people and vehicles, while the Cymbeline pinpoints enemy artillery.

These long-range ground surveillance radars placed on elevated surface can detect targets upto many kilometres. The school also has a modern meteorology system which feeds essential data to the field guns and air defence guns.

Another Prithvi Rocket Test Flight Successful

91AS0666A New Delhi PATRIOT in English 12 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Another test flight of India's indigenous surface-to-surface medium-range missile 'Prithvi' was successfully carried out on Monday from the Sriharikota Range in Andhra Pradesh, reports UNI.

Defence Ministry sources said that the test launch was carried out at 12:15 hours and that the flight of 'Prithvi' met "all mission requirements."

Dr V.S. Arunachalam, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and other senior scientists of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) watched the test flight.

The first test flight of 'Prithvi' was conducted successfully on 25 February 1988 and the second on 27 September 1989.

The 'Prithvi' has a range of 150 to 250 kilometres. It can also be launched from a mobile launcher on an eight wheeled truck.

The missile is designed to perform the tactical battlefield support role and would function as a high accuracy system to destroy various types of military targets behind the forward line of the battle field.

Sources said that after some initial test launches, user trials of the missile would be held—when Indian Army experts would study its performance—before it is actually inducted into service.

The Sriharikota station was selected for test launches since it had a free safety zone of 18 to 19 kilometres

where there was no population and whole island could be used for test firings without harming the civilian population or property.

'Prithvi' is one of the missiles being developed under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme of DRDO.

First Indigenously Built Naval Vessel Launched

1 Feb Ceremony

91AS0632A Madras THE HINDU in English 2 Feb 91 p 4

[Text] Bombay, 1 Feb—Country's first indigenously designed destroyer class vessel—described as a hybrid between Godavari and Kashin Class—built at the State-owned Mazagon Docks (MDL) here was formally launched today. This vessel, aimed at providing "substantially towards a true blue water navy" is also the first of the large indigenous warships to be propelled by gas turbines.

Christened INS Delhi, after the first Indian cruiser decommissioned in 1978, this vessel displaces twice as much as Godavari class frigates, also built by the MDL. Fitted with modern surface-to-surface, surface-to-air and anti-submarine weapon systems which the Russians helped to integrate, it will be ready for duty from 1994 after extended fitments and sea trials.

As Vice-Admiral H. Johnson, FOC-in-C, Western Naval Command said at the ceremony today, this adventure into new high tech ship development and construction underscored the well known truism: a country can build a navy, can not buy one. But given the vast coast, extended economic zones, the sea routes around the sub-continent, the Indian Navy is "still very small."

Under codename Project-15, two more such vessels for the Indian Navy are on the Mazagon Docks order books. Lot of pride in the successful execution of this project which saw the first "major warship totally Indian in design and concept" sliding down the slipway was visible during the ceremonial launch by Mrs Sakuntala Subramaniam, wife of the Maharashtra Governor today.

This Rs [rupees] 200 crore per vessel project has two propellers with anti-cavity perforations and a set of four gas turbines and a long hull. According to Rear Admiral M.M. Puri, Chairman and Managing Director of the Mazagon Docks, "the ship for some time now had been the focus of both national and international attention" and criticism on the slow progress of the construction.

But, this was apparently inevitable since "both on the drawing board and on the slipway, no Indian industry with in-house effort has handled a project of this magnitude or complexity" before. "The criticism may not be totally invalid" but there were explanations for it as well. It has "advanced weapons, high speed, long endurance, survivability in adversity and command and control functions making it a true blue water naval vessel."

To build such ships of the series in the timeframes required by the Indian Navy, the Mazagon Docks slipway in the South Yard is being extended by 40 metres. The Ritchie Dry Dock, built in 1865 is also being extended by 65 metres for dry docking of these Project-15 ships. According to Admiral Puri this enhanced the infrastructure of the Docks.

Mr C. Subramaniam, Governor, who was the chief guest, stressed the need to safeguard "our maritime interests" and said self-reliance is of paramount importance to the country.

Details on Construction

91AS0632B Madras THE HINDU in English 28 Jan 91 p 11

[Text] New Delhi, 27 Jan—India will launch the biggest warship ever to be built in an Indian dockyard early next month. The 6,500 to 7,000-ton guided missile destroyer is to be christened INS Delhi, after the first flagship of independent India which was retired in the late 1970s. Constructed by the Mazagon Docks of Bombay, it will be the lead ship of Project-15, which is the key to India's blue-water navy in the turn of the century. The next ship will be named INS Mysore. INS Delhi will be commissioned in the Navy after being fitted out in 1995. So far, three ships of this class have been sanctioned. In size and weight, the old and new Delhi will be somewhat similar though the new ship will be vastly superior and complex compared to the 'old lady' launched in 1932.

Since the retirement of INS Delhi and INS Mysore, India has not had any 'heavy' surface ships of the destroyer type. In fact, both the ships were in fact termed 'cruisers,' an appelation which has gone out of fashion now. For the purpose of circumventing the Montreux Convention, the Soviets use the term 'air capable through-deck cruiser' for their new aircraft carrier named Tblisi.

The launch will take place on 1 February at 12:51 am. This unusual hour has been chosen not for any astrological reasons but that the size of the ship requires it to be launched at the time for the highest tide. The wife of the Vice-President Dr S.D. Sharma, was slated to launch the ship but because of the ongoing Gulf conflict, the wife of the Governor of Maharashtra, Mrs Sakuntala Subramaniam, will substitute for her.

The new INS Delhi has a distinguished lineage since it would be named after the old flagship of the Indian Navy which, as the HMS Achilles, had fought the battle of the River Plate and sunk the German battleship, Admiral Graf Spee in the early period of World War II.

The ship will be powered by two Soviet AM-50 gas turbines and later ships will use the more efficient LM-2500 gas turbine being manufactured in India under licence from General Electric of the United States.

There has been a delay of one year because of the non-availability of resources in 1989. However, since it was the first ship of the class, some delays were expected. However, the Navy is particular that the rest of the programme stays within schedule because it is worried about the shrinkage of its fleet due to the decommissioning of old ships. However, the Navy itself has delayed the approval of drawings and equipment specifications and the vendors were not able to go ahead with their work.

The Navy has not yet finalised the weapons' suite for the ship though it is known that it will be of Soviet origin. However, if the size of the ship is any consideration, it is likely to carry later versions of the SS-N-22 or P-25 anti-ship cruise missiles that are capable of flying at just 10 metres above water to distances of 100 km to engage targets. To locate targets, and provide some anti-submarine protection, the ship will embark two helicopters, possibly the navalised version of the Indian-made Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH).

In addition, it will embark the SA-7 anti-aircraft missile using a semi-active monopulse radar guidance with the associated engagement and surveillance radars. This missile has a range of 30 km. To provide layered defence against aircraft and anti-ship missiles, it may also have a combination of the SA-N-11 short-range SAM and CADS-1 close-in air defence system. The CADS-N-1 is a pair of radar-directed revolver 30 mm cannon which supplement the SA-N-11 missiles which are a battery of eight tube-launched missiles with infra-red homing designed to knock out missiles that may get through the outer defence screens of the ship.

The electronic guts of the ship will be Indian designed and built. This will include the Hull mounted variable depth hull-mounted sonar and electronic warfare equipment that has been made by a joint Navy-DRDO project.

In contrast, the grand old Delhi launched in 1932 and designated as a light cruiser was a 7,000 ton ship whose main armament was six 6-inch guns and eight 4-inch and 14 40 mm anti-aircraft guns. The ship was armoured and had four 3-pdr ceremonial saluting guns.

Developments in Missile Weaponry Reported

Akash, Patriot Compared

91AS0626A New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] India's surface-to-air missile 'Akash' will be on par with the Patriot missile used in the Gulf war, according to Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, India's rocket expert, who said his laboratory also had plans to work on a novel 'reusable missile system.'

Asked to comment on the performance of the missiles used in the Gulf war, Dr Kalam said it would be too early to make any definite assessment. But, he said, it is clear that a 'missile force' is now emerging on the global scene, with missiles as the major weapon system in combat.

In an exclusive interview to PTI in the Capital on Thursday, Dr Kalam said the 'Akash' missile, now under development, will be 'hardened against countermeasures' like jamming attempts by the enemy. The ram rocket propulsion in 'Akash' will also make it light weight and highly mobile.

'Akash' tracks its target by 'active homing' in the terminal stage during which the missile locks onto its target and its guidance is independent on any ground radar. This makes it difficult to jam the missile's electronics.

The Patriot missile which has been used by the United States to blow up incoming Iraqi Scud missiles in the Gulf war over the past week depends on a ground radar for homing onto its target.

Dr Kalam, director of the Defence Research Development Laboratory (DRDL) in Hyderabad, is in charge of the Integrated Guided Missiles Development Programme (IGMDP), aimed at establishing indigenous capabilities in missile technology.

Comparing the IGMDP missiles—Prithvi, Trishul, Akash and Nag—with those used in the Gulf war, Dr Kalam said the four missiles will be state-of-art, contemporary systems when deployed later during this decade.

Production and deployment of 'Prithvi' and 'Trishul' will begin next year while the surface-to-air 'Akash' and the third generation anti-tank 'Nag' missile will go into production in 1994, Dr Kalam said.

All four systems will have a life-cycle of about 10 to 15 years, during which new derivatives with higher accuracy and better range will be designed and built, he said.

Dr Kalam said DRDL also plans to work on a new type of 'Reusable missile system' which would be programmed to deliver warheads onto targets and then return to carry out more missions.

This 'reusable missile' will be derived from the concept of the DRDL-designed Hyperplane, a reusable launch vehicle that will take off from an airport, put a satellite into orbit and return for an ordinary landing.

Commenting on advances in missile technology over the past decade, Dr Kalam said there has been major progress in three key areas: accuracy, stealth and mobility.

Guidance and control technology have reached a stage when a warhead can be taken to pinpointed targets, and missiles have emerged as cost effective systems 'without man in the loop,' he said.

An appropriate combination of design, the choice of composite materials used in production and a coat of special paints can give a missile stealth properties, making it highly radar evasive, Dr Kalam said.

The emergence of a missile force globally will necessitate the formulation of military strategies that would be based on indigenous strengths and capabilities, he said.

The 'Prithvi' uses inertial guidance, possesses an onboard computer and has a higher lethal effect compared with any other equivalent class of missiles.

'Trishul' is a quick reaction surface-to-air missile with a wide operating range and multi-role capability giving it an edge over other comparable missiles.

The anti-tank 'Nag' uses composite materials and has a 'fire and forget' system with a top attacking capability. According to DRDO, such a class of missile does not exist elsewhere.

Missile Program Upgraded

91AS0626B Madras THE HINDU in English 24 Jan 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 23 Jan—The war in the Gulf has been generating pressure on the Union Government to permit the defence authorities to proceed with the planned second test of the Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) technology demonstrator, Agni. The second prototype of the missile has been awaiting test for over a year now but the Governments of Mr V.P. Singh and Mr Chandra Shekhar have been unable to authorise a go-ahead because of pressure from the United States. In fact earlier this month the Government said, in response to a question in Parliament, that there were no plans to strengthen the capabilities of the Agni or induct it in the Army.

According to information available here, the missile war in the Gulf has accelerated the pressure on the Government from the Army and the Air Force for a useable missile force. As India does not possess any surface-to-surface or air-to-surface missile, it is vulnerable on this count to a number of countries in its neighbourhood which are believed to possess such missiles in their inventory. As a first step the Government is likely to authorise the acceleration of the Prithvi programme and two tests are expected soon of the Prithvi surface-to-surface missile from the Sriharikota range.

Of greater interest is the planned test of the Agni missile which will bring India a measure of protection against similar weapons in the region. The delay in the second test because of U.S. pressure has made the authorities reschedule the second and third tests of the missile close together. These tests will conclude the Agni programme and the Government will then have to decide whether it wants a long-range missile system or not.

The Agni, it must be emphasised, is just a technology demonstrator and the Government is on record as saying that it is not a missile system and that there are no plans to make it a deployable system.

U.S. Pressure Denied

The authorities denied there had been pressure to delay the tests and say the two tests are being scheduled together so that the down-range facilities and systems that are set up will be used in one go. The Agni is likely to be launched from the Interim Testing Range (ITR) at Balasore, Orissa.

However, even the United States has admitted that it has been trying to dissuade India from undertaking work on long-range missile systems. The then Prime Minister Mr Rajiv Gandhi also delayed the first test because of U.S. pressure.

The 250-km range Prithvi capable of carrying a one-tonne warhead to near-pinpoint strikes on high-value targets is the one missile nearest to deployment sometime next year. Its pre-fragmented warhead, containing hundreds of small spherical steel balls has been tested by being dropped from a helicopter in the Pokharan ranges. The plans also include a test of the missile by launching it at a target on land instead of at sea as had been done so far.

The missile is mounted on a Tartra Kolos vehicle and it uses a liquid propulsion motor. The fuel is storable making it easy for the missile to be moved cross-country. The Army has placed orders for the missile with the Bharat Dynamics Ltd. but has not quite clarified how it plans to deploy it.

"Agni Better than Prithvi"

The development of anti-missile technology may warrant some changes in the Prithvi programme, but experts say the speed of descent of Agni-type missiles is such that Patriot air defence systems will be ineffective.

Unlike the Scud-type of missile available in large numbers in the Gulf and the versions of Frog-7 and Scud-Bs available with Pakistan, India's surface-to-surface missiles are still R&D systems. Besides, the strategy is to use it with highly accurate conventional warheads. The stress in the programmes is to provide accurate systems.

The Strap Down Inertial Navigation System (SDINS) used by Prithvi and Agni provides a great degree of accuracy and though their Circular Error Probable (CEP) is not known accurately, it is vastly better than the Scud-B systems.

The Army would like to use the Prithvi to attack airfields, troop concentrations, and communications centres. The uses of the Agni-type system, is yet to be determined as, in all likelihood, the Government has not decided whether or not to authorise its development.

Scientific Adviser Interviewed

91AS0626C New Delhi PATRIOT in English 17 Jan 91 p 5

[Text] The missiles of all classes, particularly, with the futuristic fire and forget capability would play a dominant role in India's future defence systems, according to Dr V.S. Aurnachalam, Scientific Adviser, to the Defence Ministry, reports PTI.

Dr Aurnachalam said that efforts were being made to deploy the various missile systems, the Land-to-Land Missiles, the Land-to-Air and Anti-Tank Missiles in large numbers by the middle of nineties.

In an interview of the armed forces newsletter, SAINIK SAMACHAR, Dr Aurnachalam said along with the missiles, Smart Ammunition, which is presently only available with NATO countries and electronic warfare (EW) and counter electronic measures were also being developed at fast pace for induction by the middle nineties.

The Scientific Adviser said that smart ammunition of various types including a top attack one against futuristic tanks would be inducted soon. Dr Aurnachalam said besides this, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was exploring new fields and technologies for the armed forces for their future needs.

Dr Aurnachalam said that the fire and forget capability had already been developed for the country's indigenous anti-tank missile, Nag and efforts were being made to develop the system for other longer range surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles.

He said that intelligence gathering through unmanned vehicles will become extremely important in any new battlefield and thus DRDO was working with great success on pilotless target aircraft, which he said was the forerunner of the unmanned vehicles for intelligence gathering.

As far as the smart ammunition is concerned, Dr Aurnachalam said these systems were technology intensive and components for the sensors had to be indigenously developed as they were not available even from abroad.

On electronic warfare measures, the Scientific Adviser said its importance was so high that the electronic battle must first be won even before the start of a war. "Great deal of research and development effort was going into this area for our services and some products are already with the services," Dr Aurnachalam said.

He said particular attention was also being paid on the manufacture of jet engine blades, tank armour, submarine hulls and anti-tank ammunition. Dr Aurnachalam said research and development in this area had led to the development of missile nose cones which could face heat on re-entry and gallium arsenic semi-conductor chips which worked much faster than silicon chips.

Since its inception, Dr Aurnachalam said DRDO's activities had been stupendous from developing indigenous weapon systems on imported drawings and designs to exploring new areas such as technologies relevant to strategic defence.

The Scientific Adviser said the DRDO had problems of cost and time over-runs, prolonged trials and other challenges adding that these had been analysed and new innovations including integrated approach had now been made.

He said the integrated approach was a must so that research, development, production and induction plans worked concurrently adding that this would provide the required energy in "our national efforts to be self reliant."

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